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**SINO-AMERICAN MILITARY RELATIONS:
DETERMINANTS OF POLICY AND CORRESPONDING
MILITARY RESPONSIVENESS**

by

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March 2007

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**SINO-AMERICAN MILITARY RELATIONS: DETERMINANTS OF POLICY
AND CORRESPONDING MILITARY RESPONSIVENESS**

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ABSTRACT

Military contacts between the United States and the People's Republic of China have presented opportunities for leaders in both countries' defense community to share information and promote transparency. Unfortunately, domestic and international factors have blunted cooperation in the past two decades. Many are quick to argue that the political turmoil caused by internationally significant events such as the Tiananmen Square Crisis, the Taiwan Strait Crises, the Chinese Embassy bombing, and the EP-3 Incident disrupted defense-related exchanges and cooperation. Further examination of U.S. military relations policy displaces these casual observations in favor of explanations based on more complex domestic political agendas and bureaucratic politics in the DoD that led to more enduring changes in policy and implementation. This examination found: the CDRUSPACOM was the most engaged and consistent advocate of increased military-to-military relations across a broad spectrum of contacts regardless of the temperament in Washington, D.C.; while internationally significant events impacted military relations for a short period, the more enduring shifts in military-to-military policy were driven by domestic politics and defense leadership changes; and despite claims of "gaining momentum" by many of the actors in both nations, military-to-military contacts appear no better off in 2006 than in the 1980s.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

APCSS	Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies
ATC	Air Traffic Control
CBM	Confidence Building Measures
CDRUSPACOM	Commander, Pacific Command
CJCS	Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
COCOM	Combatant Command
CSCMA	Center for the Study of Chinese Military Affairs
DEPSECDEF	Deputy Secretary of Defense
DoD	Department of Defense
GPS	Global Positioning System
HASC	House Armed Services Committee
INSS	Institute for National Strategic Studies
MFN	Most Favored Nation
MOD	Ministry of Defense
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
NDU	National Defense University
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
P.L.	Public Law
PLA	People's Liberation Army
POW/MIA	Prisoner of War/Missing in Action
PRC	People's Republic of China
QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review
SECDEF	Secretary of Defense
UN	United Nations

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE, IMPORTANCE AND ASSUMPTIONS

Military contacts between the United States and the People’s Republic of China (PRC) have presented unique opportunities for leaders in both countries’ defense community to share information and promote increased transparency. Unfortunately, a combination of domestic and international factors has blunted the extent to which these nations have cooperated in the past two decades. Many are quick to argue that the political turmoil caused by internationally significant events such as the 1989 Tiananmen Square Crisis,¹ the 1995–96 Taiwan Strait Crises,² the 1999 bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade,³ and the 2001 EP-3 Incident⁴ disrupted defense-related exchanges and cooperation. Further examination, however, may displace these casual observations in favor of explanations based on more complex domestic political agendas or bureaucratic politics in each country’s defense department that led to more enduring government policy changes.

While both nations’ military relations policies have intentionally limited open and free relations, the impact of often unrelated international events and the domestic political agenda of policy makers in the United States have hurt military relations excessively over the last several decades. Civilian and defense leaders in both the United States and the PRC have vacillated between advocacy of and opposition to continued exchange.

Current debate in the United States revolves around the benefits and risks of continued military relations with China to United States’ national security. Some leaders

¹ In 1989, the CCP cracked down on student and worker protests calling for democratic reforms resulting in more than a dozen deaths and hundreds of injuries. The international community responded with economic and trade sanctions.

² In 1995 and 1996, the PRC launched missiles into the Taiwan Straits in response to perceptions of increased moves by the island government towards an independent Taiwan.

³ In 1999, NATO bombs hit the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, killing three Chinese journalists and outraging Chinese public opinion. NATO claimed they were firing at Yugoslav positions.

⁴ In 2001, a Chinese fighter jet collided with an American EP-3 surveillance plane over international waters off the coast of mainland China. The American aircraft was forced to complete an emergency landing into China while the Chinese fighter crashed, killing the pilot.

in the Defense Department are increasingly concerned that further exchanges place the United States' national security at risk. As recently highlighted by Congressional Research Service author Shirley Kan,

...skeptics and proponents of military exchanges with the PRC have debated whether the contacts have significant value for achieving U.S. objectives and whether the contacts have contributed to the [People's Liberation Army] PLA's warfighting capabilities that might harm U.S. security interests.⁵

This thesis reviews historical and current trends as well as the practices and policies related to military contacts between these two nations to determine what drove the ebb and flow of Sino-American military relations. More simply, it asks, what were the domestic forces that shaped United States policies relating to the extent of military cooperation and transparency? And subsequently, how did bureaucratic politics and organizational processes within the Department of Defense (DoD) affect the United States military's implementation of those policy changes?

To properly understand the current state of military exchanges and cooperation one must first examine the history of military contacts and the major events influencing cooperation to evaluate the context in which those military relations policies were eased or restrained. What is clear is that both nations have deliberately shaped military contact policies to hinder open and free exchange in order to prevent unnecessary risk associated with technology information transfer (United States' perspective) and to prevent disclosure of current operational capabilities and the competency of the individual soldier, airmen or sailor (also the United States' perspective but primarily the Chinese perspective). But the greater issue resides with determining the causes for the expansion and retraction of military relations. Were military relations policies driven by security concerns? Was the retraction of military exchange policies a result of domestic politics having little to do with actual national security or defense concerns? Or did the changes in cooperation and exchange reflect bureaucratic politics and organizational processes in the defense community that might advocate or resist cooperation?

⁵ Shirley Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 24 January 2007), i.

With these questions in mind, evaluating past and current foreign relations policies as they relate to encouraging or hindering efforts to exchange military personnel between China and the United States is critical to understanding the future of military cooperation, transparency and confidence building. Only then can constructive policy prescriptions be formulated. This thesis will educate leaders in the political and military communities in the United States about the differences in perspectives between the PRC and the United States; encourage leaders to reform existing policy objectives that remain unrealistic given those varied perspectives and expectations; and recommend new forums of exchange and contact that meet the recommended objectives. It is hoped that through greater understanding of each nation's perspectives, revised objectives and new methods of contact, both nations can move into the twenty-first century as global partners, not military rivals.

To complete this brief evaluation several considerations must be set aside. First, American interests in the Asia-Pacific region are not be examined. For the purposes of this thesis United States' interests are assumed as valid and important.⁶ Second, given the American interests in the region and the rising influence of the PRC on regional stability, it is assumed that China plays a key role in effecting the ability of the United States to meet its regional goals and objectives. As Denny Roy states,

The world has room for both China and the United States to enjoy ample security and prosperity. Yet they appear locked on a course heading toward an outcome most people in both nations would prefer to avoid, one that entails diversion of resources towards a wasteful mutual antagonism.⁷

China' growing influence requires the United States to either cooperate with the PRC in a shared-responsibility system or to compete with the PRC to restrain its influence in the region. Without the threat of the Soviet Union as the common thread that

⁶ In-depth discussions about the United States' interests in the Asia-Pacific since the Second World War can be found in Steven W. Hook and John Spanier, *American Foreign Policy Since World War II*, 16th ed. (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2004); and Michael Yahuda, *The International Politics of the Asia-Pacific*, 2d ed. (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004).

⁷ Denny Roy, "Rising China and U.S. Interests: Inevitable vs. Contingent Hazards," in Paul J. Bolt, Damon V. Coletta and Collins G. Shackelford, Jr., *American Defense Policy*, 8th ed. (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 75.

bound these nations' cooperative efforts for decades, domestic factors have played an increasing role in the shaping of Sino-American foreign relations policies.⁸

It is now widely understood that in the aftermath of the Cold War, common strategic concerns, such as those that promoted US-China cooperation, no longer compel nations to accommodate each other's interests and that absent any strategic imperative, domestic factors have become increasingly important factors in foreign policy-making.⁹

The PRC and the United States will need to forge through this era of uncertainty to meet their mutual objectives of stability in the Asia-Pacific.

B. CHINESE PERSPECTIVES ON FOREIGN MILITARY RELATIONS

For China, foreign military relations play a key part in overall foreign relation policies and practices. With the significant role of the PLA in China's government and Party politics, the PLA was used as a political tool both domestically and internationally. As Allen and McVadon state,

The PLA's foreign relations program has several goals: To shape the international environment in support of key Chinese national security objectives; to improve political and military relations with foreign countries; to enhance China's military and defense industry modernization; to provide military assistance to countries in the developing world; and to acquire knowledge in modern military doctrine, operations, training, military medicine, administration, and a host of non-combat related areas¹⁰

Similar priorities and methods can be seen in official documents such as the 2004 National Defense White Paper published by China's State Council Information Office:

To carry out military exchanges and cooperation. In line with the national foreign policy, the PLA conducts military cooperation that is non-aligned, non-confrontational and not directed against any third party. The PLA

⁸ Bates Gill, *Meeting the Challenges and Opportunities of China's Rise: Expanding and Improving Interaction between the American and Chinese Policy Communities* (Washington, D.C.: CSIS Press, 2006); and Jing-Dong Yuan, "Sino-American Military Relations Since Tiananmen: Restoration, Progress and Pitfalls," *Parameters, U.S. Army War College Quarterly*, 33, no.1 (Spring 2003): 55, 64.

⁹ Robert. S. Ross, Forward in *After the Cold War: Domestic Factors and US-China Relations*, ed., Robert S. Ross (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1998), vii.

¹⁰ Kenneth W. Allen and Eric A. McVadon, *China's Foreign Military Relations* (Washington D.C.: The Henry L. Stimson Center, October 1999), iv.

takes part in the UN peacekeeping operations and international counter-terrorism cooperation. While promoting military exchanges in various forms, the PLA works to establish security dialogue mechanisms in order to create a military security environment featuring mutual trust and mutual benefit. It takes part in bilateral or multilateral joint military exercises in non-traditional security fields so as to enhance the joint capabilities to cope with threats in those fields. The PLA learns from and draws on the valuable experience of foreign armed forces, and introduces, on a selective basis, technologically advanced equipment and better management expertise from abroad to advance the modernization of the Chinese armed forces.¹¹

To meet these goals China has used a variety of methods such as high-level exchanges, functional exchanges, attaché offices, arms sales and arms control negotiations and participation in peacekeeping operations.¹² While this thesis does not focus on the merits of these perspectives of the Chinese, *per se*, it is important to recognize that foreign military relations are intrinsically valued by the Chinese and thus can be used to maintain the overall level of the relationship.

C. LITERATURE REVIEW

For decades scholars have struggled to develop adequate theories and models that explain the international aspects of state behavior in relation to domestic factors. While the rational actor model assumes a unitary actor who makes autonomous decisions without significant consultation from other players in government,¹³ the realities in today's democracies are far different. There have been several challenges to the rational actor model that placed increased emphasis on the multitude of players in agenda setting, policy formulation and implementation. Specifically, the national foreign policy process has at least three phases that afford the greatest opportunity for the involvement of senior government officials to shape the agenda, alternatives, policies and implementation of a government's foreign policy: agenda setting phase, alternative presentation/selection phase and implementation phase.

¹¹ *China's National Defense in 2004* (Beijing, China: Information Office of China's State Council, 27 December 2004). <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/china/doctrine/natdef2004.html> (accessed 12 October 2006).

¹² Allen and McVadon, *China's Foreign Military Relations*, 19.

¹³ Glenn R. Hastedt, *American Foreign Policy: Past, Present and Future*, 6th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 2006), 247–8.

1. Agenda-setting Phase

What are the origins of policy? Or, as Kingdon asks, “What makes people in and around government attend...to some subjects and not others?”¹⁴ More simply, how do certain issues get to *be* issues in the first place? Understanding the origins of issues and how those issues often turn into policy, legislation and practice is an important part of the examination of the foreign policies of nations. The intra-national influences brought about by politics cannot be ignored as critical factors in policy formulation.

As the reviews of Kingdon’s first edition conclude, *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policy*’s use of empirical data to examine the agenda-setting phase in policy formulation and alternative selection provide invaluable evidence confirming the complexity of governmental politics.¹⁵ In short, Kingdon concluded that while members of Congress are important to the agenda-setting phase, it is the president and his political appointees that have the greatest influence on agenda setting.¹⁶

It is therefore important to find the origins of issues; whether they begin in the legislative branch or executive branch; who champions an issue; and their motivations. Unfortunately (or fortunately as constitutionalists would argue), in a democratic system such as the United States, politics sometimes gets in the way of purely rational agenda setting, alternative selection and policy formulation. A convergence of “problems, solutions and politics [does] not happen automatically in American politics.”¹⁷

Based on Kingdon’s explanations of the agenda-setting phase, one should expect the president and his appointees to shape the agenda of Sino-American foreign and military relations. If Kingdon’s conclusions hold true, the president and his political

¹⁴ John W. Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, 2d ed. (New York: Longman, 2003), 1.

¹⁵ Evelyn Brodkin, “Review: Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policy,” *Political Science Quarterly*, 100, no. 1 (Spring 1985): 165–166; and Clifford J. Wirth, “Review: Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policy,” *The Ameri95 Political Science Review*, 79, no. 1 (March 1985): 213–4.

¹⁶ Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, 42–44.

¹⁷ James A. Thurber, forward in *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, 2d ed., by John W. Kingdon (New York: Longman, 2003), viii.

appointees, such as the SECDEF, will have the most significant impact on the military relationship between the United States and the PRC during this phase and less of an effect thereafter.

2. Alternative Presentation and Course of Action Selection Phase

One of the most highly regarded explanations of the alternative development and selection phase in policy decisions in the latter part of the twenty-first century is Graham Allison's work, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, first published in 1971 and since updated.¹⁸ Widely accepted by the political science community, Allison's original work has found its way into classrooms across the Western world for more than three decades.¹⁹ Based primarily on the Cuban Missile Crisis as his case study, Allison attempted to explain two main points: a) What are the internal forces/actors of government that shaped policy makers' decisions during crises? and b) How did organizational behavior affect the outcomes of certain policy decisions made by senior government officials?

In both editions of this work, Allison and Zelikow offer a “Model III: Governmental Politics,” which describes the influences of lower-level actors on the available alternatives presented to the decision maker and on course of action selection. Through “bargaining games,” influential leaders work towards the least common denominator recommendation.²⁰ There is thus:

...no unitary actor but rather many actors...who act in terms of no consistent set of strategic objectives but rather according to various conceptions of national, organizational and personal goals; players who make government decisions not by a single, rational choice but by the pulling and hauling that is politics.²¹

¹⁸ Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Examining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Little Brown & Co., 1971); and Graham T. Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Examining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2d ed. (New York: Longman, 1999).

¹⁹ David P. Houghton, “Essence of Excision: A Critique of the New Version of Essence of Decision,” *Security Studies*, 10, no. 1 (2000): 151.

²⁰ Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Examining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 255.

²¹ Ibid.

This model, more commonly termed the bureaucratic politics model, describes a set of players who share power and view the problem and potential solutions based on their varied position in government. Or as some call it, “where you stand depends on where you sit.” Each player approaches the problem from a different frame of reference and therefore offers alternatives that may differ greatly from those presented by other actors. The State Department, for example, might offer diplomatic means to resolve an international problem while one would expect the DoD to offer military means for the same problem. Once alternatives are proposed and a course of action is selected, that decision is passed to the responsible organization for implementation.

In the cases that are examined in this thesis, therefore, I evaluate the influence of lower-level actors in the alternative presentation and selection phase of policy making. In the case of Sino-American military relations, Allison’s explanations point to senior leaders in the DoD, such as Assistant Secretaries, Under Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries, as the primary actors in the alternative presentation and course of action selection process. The top-level political actors should have less of a role in this phase.

3. Implementation Phase

Termed “Model II: Organizational Behavior,” this model attempted to explain military responsiveness to civil direction. This model presented governmental behavior as follows:

...less as deliberate choices and more as outputs of large organizations functioning according to standard patterns of behavior....Thus, government behavior relevant to any important problem reflects the independent output of several organizations, partially coordinated by government leaders. Government leaders can substantially disturb, but rarely precisely control, the specific behavior of these organizations.²²

Given the prominence of the DoD in the United States and its integration into major decision-making bodies such as the cabinet and National Security Council, one would be hard pressed to argue that it lacked the ability to avoid “precise control” by civil authorities. In fact, under the leadership of more recent administrations one could argue

²² Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Examining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 143.

the defense community has grown in importance, influence and credibility to the extent that today's environment invites such behavior in the United States' military more than ever before.

The ability of the Department of Defense to "shirk" orders given by civilian leaders has grown significantly since the Cuban Missile Crisis.²³ Even in the latter part of the twentieth and in the early years of the twenty-first century where many have argued that traditional military threats have declined significantly, especially since the end of the cold war, the American armed forces continue to gain public trust and confidence and a corresponding level of influence over civilian leader decision-making processes.²⁴ Keeping that growing influence in check and reducing the risk of autonomous action on the part of the U.S. military appears real and necessary. As Feaver argues, "political control does not end with the delegation decision."²⁵

Allison's original work, however, was not without criticism. As details involving the inner communications between the most senior administrators in the United States government slowly became available, and as previously disclosed information proved false, other scholars began to question the supporting evidence behind Allison's explanations.²⁶ In response to those critics and armed with new information surrounding the crisis, Allison teamed with Philip Zelikow to publish the second edition in 1999. While this work retracted some evidence previously proven false, several authors, such as Houghton in 2000 found it once again failed to adequately support the main arguments.²⁷

Despite these critiques and the book's somewhat flawed use of the Cuban Missile Crisis as a supporting case, the underlying premises hold true. In short, the authors argue that a combination of domestic forces, some of which have little to do with the greater

²³ Peter D. Feaver, *Armed Servants: Agency, Oversight and Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003). This work discusses the ability of military institutions to either shirk (avoid) civil direction or work (comply with civil authority).

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid., 75.

²⁶ One such example is David A. Welch, "The Organization Process and Bureaucratic Politics Paradigms," *International Security*, 17, no. 2 (Fall 1992).

²⁷ Houghton, *Essence of Excision: A Critique of the New Version of Essence of Decision*.

international context, shaped policy maker decisions and the tangible outcomes that stemmed from those decisions. Foreign policy therefore, often reflects the domestic agenda of several political actors or the bureaucratic apparatus with the greatest influence within the administration. The outcomes that may be derived from those policies are often skewed by organizational processes that distort the intended outcomes into unintended results. In the cases examined in this thesis, bureaucratic resistance and the complexity of civilian control are evident in the development and implementation of Sino-American military relations.

D. SURVEY OF PRIOR WORK ON THE QUESTION

Although many works adequately examine the United States' policies, practices and laws concerning the exchange of military members with the PRC, few account for the origins of such policies, the domestic influences that shape those policies over time, and the defense department's implementation of such policies. A recent work by the Congressional Research Service analyzes military contacts between the United States and China from 1993 to 2006. Yet this report focuses largely on congressional oversight and only summarizes contacts between high-level officials--usually flag officers or civilian appointees--in the defense community. What is missing in this and other works is a detailed evaluation of the origin of domestic policies and how the military community embraced or shirked those policies. Similarly, given the fact-based nature of these types of reports (outlining facts for consideration by Congress without providing causal explanations) it fails to adequately explain the changes in policy over time.

The most relevant work comes from a book titled, *After the Cold War: Domestic Factors and US-China Relations*.²⁸ In this edited book the authors examine changes in Sino-American foreign relations from the cold war through the immediate aftermath of the Tiananmen Square Incident in 1989. Consistent with the premises of my thesis, Ross acknowledges the changing international context that changed the basis for Sino-American relations.

²⁸ Robert S. Ross, ed., *After the Cold War: Domestic Factors and US-China Relations* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1998).

...in the aftermath of the Cold War, common strategic concerns, such as those that promoted US-China cooperation, no longer compel nations to accommodate each other's interests and that absent any strategic imperative, domestic factors have become increasingly important factors in foreign policy-making.²⁹

The chapters in Ross' edited volume evaluate the broader aspects of Sino-American relations, including economic and trade ties from the end of the cold war through the mid-1990s. This broad approach leaves room for further examination. Specifically, the more narrowly defined area of Sino-American military relations warrants further study, especially given the internationally significant events occurring since the publication of this book in 1998 such as the Chinese Embassy bombing and EP-3 incident.

1. Major Debates and Approaches to the Issue

The dominant approach to this issue has been to examine the changes in policy as they correspond to significant international events such as Tiananmen, Taiwan Strait, Belgrade Bombing or the EP-3 incident. This thesis, however, shows that the debate over benefits versus risk of military relations between these nations owes its origin more deeply in the internal politics of the United States than with these internationally significant events.

2. Major Questions and Arguments

The task therefore is not only to examine international events that have influenced exchange policies, but to take into account the domestic agendas that have driven changes in military cooperation. As previously stated, much debate about the risks to national security posed by military cooperation has continued to present day. Many, if not most, of these debates are entwined with political motivations often driven by emotions or political agendas unrelated to the actual effects of military contacts.

Similarly, the DoD's approach to implementing these policies can either be explained by the personal views and agendas of key leaders within the military or by

²⁹ Ross, Forward in *After the Cold War: Domestic Factors and US-China Relations*.

directly related empirical perceptions that might explain the extent of associated risk. What is clear, however, is that military relations as a whole were not an end in and of themselves. They were often a tool for larger political purposes used in many cases to express the administration's displeasure with PRC policies or practices—thus a carrot and stick. As a result, the benefits of a strong, strategic military-to-military relationship between the United States and the PRC are often missed.

Given these theories and recent works concerning the formulation of foreign policy by the principals and the resultant implementation by their agents, several research questions may be posed:

- Do leaders' domestic political agendas influence the military relations policies of nations more than other more directly relevant forces?
- Do changes in political party of the legislative majority, executive administration or senior military officers affect military relations policies without a corresponding change in the international environment?
- Do bureaucratic politics within the DoD alter the implementation of military relations policies to the extent that they do not accurately reflect the intentions of the principals' original policy?

E. METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

To examine these questions I use the military relations policies of the United States and the PRC as a case study. Since rapprochement in 1971, the Sino-American relationship has evolved greatly from periods of stern tension to periods of relative trust, cooperation and transparency. Changes in the United States' leadership and internationally significant events have been turning points in military relations between these nations. This case therefore provides a great example of a variety of policy changes and a diverse implementation spectrum. Specifically, I examine significant events of change such as the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000, changes in executive leadership beginning with the President George H. W. Bush and senior defense leadership changes as they overlapped internationally significant events in the latter part of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

This thesis uses a combination of case study, comparative study, content analysis and trend analysis to draw conclusions about previous and current contacts. Sources

include primary policy documents, standard secondary published documents, laws, reports and interviews. By using a combination of scholarly work, DoD documents, publications from relevant think tanks, news releases and legislation, I capture the necessary evidence to show the significance of domestic politics in policy formulation and the extent of bureaucratic politics in policy implementation.

F. ROADMAP

The first section of this work outlines the major actors involved in the formulation and implementation of foreign military relations policies. It is important to understand the players involved in foreign military relations, what role each agent played in the process and in what stage of the process they participated. Once the actors and processes are identified and introduced, I examine the internationally significant and domestic events that have impacted Sino-American military relations. Case studies that examine the origins of the major legislative pieces related to Sino-American military relations, changes in presidential administrations and senior defense leadership will follow. Lastly, I present some policy recommendations for future military relations policies.

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II. MAJOR ACTORS

The formulation and implementation of U.S. foreign policy is a complicated and protracted process that involves the efforts of a wide range of governmental and non-governmental organizations. By design, the diffusion of responsibilities in the U.S. federal government requires the convergence of the executive and legislative branches in the policy-making process related to foreign military relations and often involves additional actors such as non-governmental entities like think tanks, the media and interest groups. In the two major stages considered in this thesis, policy making and implementation, understanding the roles of the major actors is an important step in gaining a greater appreciation of the forces that influence foreign relations and military relations policies development and military responsiveness.

It is important, however, first to clarify the two levels of policy that are related to this thesis: foreign relations and military relations. The *overall foreign policy* level provides an umbrella of coverage for all other foreign relations sub-policies to follow (see Figure 1). In the case of Sino-American relations, there was an “overall” position of the executive branch under which all other sub-policies fell. Those sub-policy areas included not only military relations, but also trade relations, diplomatic relations, etc. This distinction between the United States’ overall foreign policy stance towards China and the specific military relations policies between the two nations is one that must be clearly understood given the overlapping roles of several actors in both levels of policy development. To varying degrees, the president and Congress have had a role in not only setting the overall foreign relations policy towards the PRC but also in the specific area of foreign military relations policy. For the purposes of this thesis, the overall foreign relations policy level will hereafter be termed “foreign relations” policy and the military sub-policy area will be termed *military relations* policy.

United States Foreign Policy Towards China		
Military Relations	Trade Relations	Diplomatic Relations

Figure 1. Relationship Between Levels of Foreign Policy

A. POLICY MAKING

American foreign relations policy development has several actors that stand out as primary contributors. Within the executive branch it is obvious the president and his closest security advisors play a critical role in setting the agenda and in presenting a set of policy options to other actors that are involved in the decision-making process. “When the administration considers a given issue a top-priority item, many other participants do, too.”³⁰ Through public statements, legislative proposals and executive orders the president and his staff shaped foreign relations policy directly. American views on foreign relations policies are often articulated by the president and other civilian leaders in the administration. These views in turn shape the agenda of the legislative branch which either embraced or opposed the executive’s comments. The mere fact that the executive makes public statements concerning the foreign relations policies of the United States helps make these issues *become* issues within the legislature. “When the president sends up a bill, it takes first place in the queue. All other bills take second place.”³¹

Once the legislative branch champions the issue, the task of shaping the issue into a formal piece of public policy falls in the hands of elected officials and congressional staffers. In many cases, a Senator or Congressman sponsors a legislative proposal or presented an amendment for consideration by the most applicable committees. In the case of military relations policies, equity rests in more than one committee...making the process even more complicated than issues with only one committee of interest. Both the Foreign Relations (called International Relations in the House of Representatives) and

³⁰ Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, 21.

³¹ Ibid., 23.

Armed Services Committees in the Senate and the House of Representatives have roles in pushing legislation through Congress. Whereas the executive branch plays a key role in setting the agenda, identifying and selecting alternatives is often more the role of Congress than the executive.³² Through painful tasks of garnering support for proposed alternatives, the political leverage of actors within the legislature become the predominant tool used to negotiate the difficult obstacles that hinder change.

Lastly, one cannot ignore the influence of interest groups and think tanks in the shaping of agendas, options and policy decisions. While these organizations play no official roles in agenda setting, alternative identification and policy decisions, their advocacy for or opposition to new or changing policies relating to the military relations of the United States and the PRC had an impact on civilian leader decisions. While Kingdon finds that these groups played a lesser role than the governmental actors, their influence through lobbying and scholarly publication does have an impact on political officials who consider their evidence and arguments.³³

The formal results of policy development are found in public policy, law, executive orders and are carried down into military instructions and regulations. One of the most recent examples of the complex process of taking an immature idea, developing alternatives, negotiating the selection of alternatives and finally, the codification of those decisions into public policy can best be seen in the four-year process of defense reform in the 1980s that culminated in the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986. The inner workings of domestic politics and their influence on defense policy can readily be seen in Locher's *Victory on the Potomac*,³⁴ which captures the roles of policy makers and their interactions in what was considered the most significant defense reform since the Second World War.

According to Locher, the initial proposals for change in the structure of the DoD came from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) in his annual testimony

³² Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, 35.

³³ Ibid., 67.

³⁴ James R. Locher, III, *Victory on the Potomac: The Goldwater-Nichols Act Unifies the Pentagon* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2004).

before the House Armed Services Committee (HASC). Only a few staff members and Congressmen championed the issue through subsequent fact-finding efforts and hearing. The ensuing months, and eventually years, were a protracted interplay between the CJCS, Service Secretaries and Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) and Congress. The bureaucratic resistance from the defense community and interest groups, as well as the reluctance of key congressional leaders to allow the issue to surface out of subcommittee, nearly grounded the efforts of congressional and defense advocates to a halt. This convoluted process provided ample opportunities for personal agendas, public opinion and political power to influence the outcomes and often resulted in only modest changes in policy, especially during the election years when defense policies were at the forefront of party agendas. Although at a smaller scale, the difficulties seen in the completion of the Goldwater-Nichols Act can also be seen in the development of foreign military relations policies.

B. IMPLEMENTATION

Once policy decisions are reached the implementation of those decisions rested clearly on the shoulders of several actors. Obviously, the DoD was the most central actor in this phase. More specifically, several offices and individuals within the department played critical roles in ensuring policies were implemented in accordance with the decision makers' intentions. The SECDEF, Combatant Commanders (in this case, Commander, Pacific Command (CDRUSPACOM)), and CJCS were directly involved in the implementation of foreign military relations policies.

The SECDEF and his immediate staff in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) play not only a role in the policy making phase, but more importantly, play one of the most influential roles in the implementation phase. Taking the direction provided by civil authorities and turning that guidance into executable practices was often a difficult task. Legal interpretations notwithstanding, the process of changing directives in the enormous bureaucracy that is the DoD takes months, even years.

In recent years, the role of the SECDEF can arguably be considered more prominent than any time in history. With Secretary Rumsfeld's unique personality, frank

approach and clear support from the President, the SECDEF has had tremendous latitude to implement policy with great discretion.³⁵ As my interviews with scholars in China confirmed, even the Chinese realize the significant influence the SECDEF has on not only shaping implementation but also in presenting outsiders clues about the DoD's intentions.³⁶

The two remaining actors with significant influence on the implementation of foreign military relations policies are both uniformed officers of the United States Armed Forces: the CDRUSPACOM and CJCS. Historically, the CDRUSPACOM has played a very proactive role in implementing the foreign military relations policies of the United States by establishing and maintaining stronger relations with nations falling within the geographic boundaries of the command.³⁷ The current CDRUSPACOM has followed this proactive stance and may be the most integral actor in the implementation phase of foreign military relations as they relate to the Asia-Pacific. Although to a lesser extent, the CJCS has also been an important implementation-phase player within the DoD. As the principal military advisor to the president, the CJCS holds a very prominent and public role that can either foster or hinder foreign military relations.

C. SUMMARY

Given the nature and design of democracies, the inherent bargaining process often diluted the policy decisions so greatly that only minimal changes occurred over long periods of time. Correspondingly, the results of such policy changes have been less-than-

³⁵ Remarks Following a Meeting With the Secretary of Defense and an Exchange With Reporters in Crawford, Texas, 21 August 2002, John Woolley and Gerhard Peters, The American Presidency Project [online], Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database), <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=64241> (accessed 30 January 2007); and Terrance Hunt, "Bush Gives Rumsfeld Strong Show of Support," *Associated Press Online*, 14 April 2006. <http://web.lexis-nexis.com.libproxy.nps.edu:8080/universe/document?m=6994beb715193be3852bea7e287c49bf&docnum=4&wchp=dGLzVlz-zSkVb&md5=eec98c94bf78d25413f9d9821f37ab2e> (accessed 30 January 2007). These two examples highlight President Bush's confidence in Secretary Rumsfeld's abilities and the latitude offered him to meet National Security Objectives.

³⁶ Interview by author, 9 June 2006, Shanghai, China with Zhang Pei, Deputy Director, Department of Strategic Studies, Shanghai Institute of International Studies.

³⁷ U.S. Pacific Command covers more than 50% of the world's surface and contains more than 60% of the world's population in different 43 countries.

perfect and commonly slow in coming.³⁸ However, in cases of extreme political rift and when conditions presented a disproportionate amount of influence by one of the major actors, significant shifts in policy development and implementation were possible.

It is in these periods that one can find the greatest changes in Sino-American relations policies. Specifically, transitions of the executive administration from Republican to Democratic and back to Republican, political fallout of the Chinese espionage investigations in the late 1990s and changes in senior defense officials during these same periods are great examples of these opportunities for more dramatic changes in policy and implementation.

³⁸ Hastedt, *American Foreign Policy: Past, Present and Future*, 249.

III. CASE STUDIES

Explaining the forces that drive the changes in American foreign policy is difficult given the complex web of politics involving a multitude of actors with differing perspectives and agendas. Examining several periods in the evolution of Sino-American military relations policies provides tremendous insight into the fragility of Sino-American relations as a whole. In the context of a post-cold war environment where these two nations lacked a common strategic objective that forced greater cooperation, determining a long-term strategy for mutually beneficial relations was difficult work.

Three specific cases best articulate the relationship of domestic forces and Sino-American military relations policies. First, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (FY00 NDAA), the current foundation of legal requirements concerning military-to-military exchanges and contacts between the United States and the PRC, shows how partisan politics shaped foreign military relations policies. Second, the changes in policy and practice during the transitions of presidential administrations show how agendas and policies shifted simply as a result of the senior executive change. While many would describe administration changes as natural aspects in the American democracy, closer examination indicates several changes were driven more by the desire to look different from one's predecessor than by any substantive policy perspectives or objective data. Lastly, changes in the defense community leadership affected not only the development of military relations policies but also the implementation of those policies over time. These three cases will be examined in greater detail.

A. THE NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2000

A pivotal point in Sino-American foreign relations came in 1998 when reports of Chinese espionage in DoD nuclear labs surfaced. To investigate these allegations Congress established the Select Committee on U.S. National Security and Military/Commercial Concerns with the People's Republic of China led by Congressman Cox of California. Consistent with Kingdon's conclusions about the roles of Congress

and mass media throughout the decision-making process, this committee's year-long investigation and surrounding media attention given to the extent of damage caused by Chinese set a tone for the 105th and 106th Congresses that significantly impacted the foreign military relations policies of the United States towards the PRC. It is within this context that Congress set about reducing the risks to national security through several mechanisms directed at tightening control of sensitive information, increasing DoD reporting for improved congressional oversight and prohibiting interactions with the Chinese that were deemed as critical to national security.

The results of Congress' efforts to preserve national security through legislation aimed at military exchanges and contacts with the PRC were addressed in the FY00 NDAA (P.L. 106-65). Three specific sections of this law dealt with the PRC: Sections 914, 1202 and 1201 of P.L. 106-65 (See Appendices 1–3 for the full text of these sections). This document established a formal DoD institution for examining the PLA's capabilities and modernization efforts, outlined several prohibitions concerning military contacts, and dictated annual reporting on the PRC from the DoD to Congress who retained oversight authority.

By examining these sections one can gain an appreciation for the influence of domestic politics on the Sino-American military relationship. While section 1201 dealt directly with military-to-military contacts, and therefore is the most relevant section to this thesis, a review of sections 914 and 1202 also provides additional evidence of the partisan context and clues of military responsiveness to Congressional direction as it related to the PRC provisions.

1. Section 914, Center for the Study of Chinese Military Affairs (CSCMA)

Section 914, entitled "Center for the Study of Chinese Military Affairs," compelled the DoD to establish a center dedicated,

...to study and inform policymakers in the Department of Defense, Congress, and throughout the Government regarding the national goals and strategic posture of the People's Republic of China and the ability of

that nation to develop, field, and deploy an effective military instrument in support of its national strategic objectives.³⁹

The rationale for such an institution came from a perception of “increasingly tense relations”⁴⁰ between the PRC and the United States and was designed “to provide a comprehensive analysis and promote broader understanding.”⁴¹ The authors of this section advocated increased analysis and reporting of the PRC’s “military affairs and strategy...a critical capability not currently available [in the DoD].”⁴²

There were clearly two sides on this issue. Advocates embraced Mearsheimer’s later proclamation that “the United States and China are likely to engage in an intense security competition with considerable potential for war.”⁴³ With fears that “the Chinese now have the capability of threatening us with our own nuclear technology,”⁴⁴ House leaders pushed this section through to increase the level of importance given to monitoring China’s modernization efforts. It appeared that the United States was moving in a direction that would place China as the next Soviet Union.

Opponents of the provision were more in line with Nye’s self-fulfilling prophecy comments⁴⁵ that exposed the dangers of mislabeling the PRC as a threat. In doing so, the United States could push the PRC towards a confrontational stance with the United States. For the opponents, the message behind this requirement set a tone some members of Congress found unwarranted and precarious. As Senator Kerrey (D-NE) stated during deliberations about this portion of the NDAA, “I fear that we may be losing touch with the reality concerning the size of the threat we face in China relative to the far greater

³⁹ Public Law 106-65, *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000*, sec. 914, “Center for the Study of Chinese Military Affairs,” 5 October 1999.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² U.S. Congress, House, *Report on the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 [to Accompany H.R. 1401]*, 106th Cong., H. Rpt. 106-162, 24 May 1999.

⁴³ John J. Mearsheimer, “Clash of the Titans,” *Foreign Policy*, 141 (Jan/Feb 2005): 47.

⁴⁴ Carroll J. Doherty, “GOP’s China Gamble: Back Trade, Attack Policy,” *CQ Weekly* (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 29 May 1999): 1248.

⁴⁵ While serving as Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, Joseph Nye cautioned United States leaders that fears of China becoming the next world power and threat to the United States could lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy if not properly managed.

Russian nuclear threat.”⁴⁶ He went on to say, “the Chinese threat is nowhere near the danger that the Russian nuclear threat poses to the people of the United States of America.”⁴⁷

These concerns were echoed by President Clinton during his signing statement of the Act. The President was,

...concerned with the tone and language of a number of provisions of [the act] relating to China, which could be detrimental to our interests. The Act’s provision establishing the Center for Study of Chinese Military Affairs...similar to those previously produced on Soviet military power, assumes an outcome...that China is bent on becoming a military threat to the United States.”⁴⁸

Behind this section of the law, and similar to the findings of the Cox Commission and the other provisions drafted in P.L. 106-65, Section 914 was a clear critique of the Clinton Administration by the Republican Congress who felt previous attempts to establish a China-focused center were inadequate. That center was the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS) which was founded less than four years earlier.

In 1995 President Clinton had signed H.R. 4650 which established the APCSS. This center,

...provides a focal point where national officials, decision makers and policy makers can gather to exchange ideas, explore pressing issues and achieve a greater understanding of the challenges that shape the security environment of the Asia-Pacific region.⁴⁹

But this center established by Democrats was criticized by the Republicans. House Report 106-162, released by the Republican-controlled HASC stated,

⁴⁶ U.S. Congress, Senate, *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000*, 106th Cong., 1st sess., S. 1059, *Congressional Record*, vol. 145, no. 77, daily ed. (26 May 1999), S5982.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ President, Signing Statement, “Statement on Signing the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000,” *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, 11 October 1999. Retrieved from 1999 Presidential Documents Online via GPO Access (accessed 6 November 2006).

⁴⁹ Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, “About Us” statement.
http://www.apcss.org/graphics/graphic_aboutus.htm (accessed 18 December 2006).

Currently the Department of Defense lacks an organization whose primary mission is to provide comprehensive analysis and promote broader understanding of Chinese military affairs and strategy. In the committee's judgment, the Asia-Pacific Center is not structured to provide the needed perspectives on Chinese military affairs...and is not well sited to provide senior policy-makers with timely analysis.⁵⁰

Clearly, the committee used this opportunity to blame the Clinton Administration for failing to place adequate focus on the Chinese military. The requirement to establish the new center as outlined in the 2000 bill sent a message to the administration that, in the view of the Republicans, the Democrats had failed to properly handle the post-cold war environment. The partisan tones and critiques show the influence of domestic politics on the policy-making phase of military relations policy. This section also provides evidence of military responsiveness to Congressional requirements through an examination of the center's efforts since its establishment in 2000.

In the last six years, the center appears to have had only minimal support from the DoD. Returning to the quote above from House Report 106-162, Congress clearly felt APCSS was spread too thin to adequately devote attention to the PRC and therefore created a center (CSCMA) that would be more narrowly focused. Yet, given that the National Defense University (NDU) has failed to find a permanent director and is using an acting director who also serves as the director of CSCMA's parent organization, the Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS),⁵¹ one would be hard pressed to argue the DoD has been responsive to Congress' intent. Since its establishment, the center has only published eight of the fifty *Strategic Forums* from INSS, one of seven McNair Papers, and only two books.⁵² Despite the intended "Chinese military affairs" focus, many of these publications dealt with issues unrelated to PRC military modernization or strategy. Consistent with Allison and Zelikow's conclusions about bureaucratic resistance, the

⁵⁰ U.S. Congress, House, *Report on the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 [to Accompany H.R. 1401]*, 106th Cong., H. Rpt. 106-162, 24 May 1999.

⁵¹ The Center is under the direct supervision of its Director, who is appointed by the President of NDU and reports to the Director of INSS. Unfortunately, Dr. Flanagan serves as the Director of both entities and subsequently must devote his attention to a larger span of responsibilities than those of CSCMA.

⁵² A complete listing of CSCMA publications can be found at http://www.ndu.edu/inss/China_Center/INSS_CSCMA_Pubs.htm (accessed 1 February 2007).

center's minimal contributions to the greater understanding of Chinese military affairs provides evidence that the DoD has been successful in avoiding "precise civilian control" over its programs.

It is therefore evident that domestic politics, not necessarily the findings of the Cox Commission or any other international event, led to the introduction of this portion of the legislation. The Cox Report simply created an opportunity for the Congress to criticize the Clinton Administration's failed attempts to treat China as a serious concern. Unfortunately for those who supported the creation of the CSCMA, it appears that the center has failed to yield the results Congress had intended in regards to increasing the study of and understanding of Chinese military affairs and strategy, but as opponents feared, has labeled the PRC as a threat, in the company of the former Soviet Union.

2. Section 1202, Annual Report on Military Power of the People's Republic of China

The second section of the FY00 NDAA dealing specifically with the PRC was Section 1202. Again, while this section did not directly deal with military-to-military relations between the United States and the PRC, an examination of its origins and implementation provides evidence of domestic politics' influence on PRC-related policy making and subsequent military responsiveness to Congressional requirements.

As outlined in this portion of the bill, the DoD would be required to produce an annual report on,

...the current and future military strategy of the People's Republic of China. The report shall address the current and probable future course of military-technological development on the People's Liberation Army and the tenets and probable development of Chinese grand strategy, security strategy, and military strategy, and of military organizations and operational concepts, through the next 20 years.⁵³

Much like the comments related to the introduction of Section 914, congressional advocates felt China was a growing threat while opponents noted that the only one other

⁵³ Public Law 106-65, *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000*, sec. 1202, "Annual Report on Military Power of the People's Republic of China," 5 October 1999.

nation with a similar reporting status was the Soviet Union. The Congress was caught in the Mearsheimer-Nye debate once again.

From early on in the legislative cycle, the offering of Amendment 394 by Senator Lott (R-MS) on 26 May 1999 and the subsequent deliberations of what would become Section 1202 were wrought with partisan comments. Senator Lott's comments on that day were clearly aimed at blaming the Democratic Administration for recent failures of counter-intelligence.

I have stated that the damage to U.S. national security as a result of China's nuclear espionage is probably the greatest I have seen in my entire career. And, unfortunately, the [Clinton] administration's inattention to—or even hostility towards—counterintelligence and security has magnified this breach.⁵⁴

He went on to say,

It is simply incredible that it took this administration 2 years from the date the National Security Adviser was first briefed by DOE officials on the problem of Chinese espionage at the nuclear weapons laboratories, to sign a new Presidential directive to strengthen counterintelligence at the labs and elsewhere. But this apparently is exactly what happened.⁵⁵

And, after all this, it is simply incredible that the President would claim that all this damage was a result of actions of previous administrations and that he had not been told of any espionage that had occurred on his watch. But this is exactly what the President said in a mid-March press conference.⁵⁶

Further comments about the Clinton Administration by the Senator from Mississippi included the words “probe the administration,” “scandal,” “accountable for actions,” and

⁵⁴ U.S. Congress, Senate, *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000*, 106th Cong., 1st sess., S. 1059, *Congressional Record*, vol. 145, no. 77, daily ed. (26 May 1999), S5982.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

“much to be desired.”⁵⁷ Other Senators joined in the fray. Senator Murkowski (R-AK) even “dare[d] the President to veto this legislation.”⁵⁸

The Republicans were on a roll. As one Republican staffer stated, we’re going to milk this Chinese espionage issue for all it’s worth.”⁵⁹ The Senate Majority Leader, Senator Lott, acknowledged, “it moves the national political debate onto territory that is friendlier for Republicans.”⁶⁰ By linking the espionage case to the well-recognized and ever-present Taiwan issue, the Republicans hoped to gain momentum as the elections approached.

As previously stated, Section 1202 required the DoD to report “on the current and future military strategy of the”⁶¹ PRC. Most of this section’s verbiage concerning the examination of China’s *broad objectives and strategy* came from Ney’s (R-OH) amendment offered on 26 May 1999,⁶² but before the end of the cycle Lott’s more narrowly-focused amendment (Amdt. 394) was incorporated into this portion of the bill. Unlike Ney’s version, Lott’s amendment was solely focused on security in the Taiwan Strait.⁶³ If fully incorporated into the law, Amendment 394 would have created a second annual report that only dealt with PLA capabilities that could be used against Taiwan.

Fortunately, Congress recognized this duplicative requirement and rolled to the two amendments into one section requiring only one annual report. Domestic politics influenced the creation of an annual reporting requirement the DoD could either embrace with full vigor or provide only minimal attention towards. Unfortunately for Congress,

⁵⁷ U.S. Congress, Senate, *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000*, 106th Cong., 1st sess., S. 1059, *Congressional Record*, vol. 145, no. 77, daily ed. (26 May 1999), S5982.

⁵⁸ U.S. Congress, Senate, *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000*, 106th Cong., 1st sess., S. 1059, *Congressional Record*, vol. 145, no. 78, daily ed. (27 May 1999), S6160.

⁵⁹ John Bresnahan, “Cox Report Sparks Wave of GOP Initiatives,” *Roll Call*, 27 May 1999.

⁶⁰ Doherty, *GOP’s China Gamble: Back Trade, Attack Policy*, 1250.

⁶¹ Public Law 106-65, *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000*, sec. 1202, “Annual Report on the Military Power of the People’s Republic of China,” 5 October 1999.

⁶² U.S. Congress, House, *Providing for the Consideration of H.R. 1401, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 [to Accompany H.R.195]*, 106th Cong., 1st sess. (26 May 1999), H. Rpt. 106-166.

⁶³ U.S. Congress, Senate, *Amendments Submitted - National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000*, 106th Cong., 1st sess., S. 1059, *Congressional Record*, vol. 145, no. 77, daily ed. (26 May 1999), S6073.

much like the lack of devotion given to the CSCMA, the annual “military power” reports that came from the DoD seemed to receive only minimal attention. Although only three lines from Lott’s amendment that focused on PLA capabilities towards Taiwan were placed into the text of Section 1202, it appears that the DoD latched on to the ‘Taiwan’ issue as the primary focus of its reports from 2000 to 2004.

While the Taiwan issue remains one of the most worrisome and potentially the most explosive problems between the United States and the PRC there are broader issues concerning PRC military modernization that warranted reporting as well. However, in the short period since the requirement was established this annual report can arguably be described as an example of the DoD doing the minimum to meet the letter of the law. This is not to say that the DoD does not put effort into creating these reports. It is not the level of effort that warrants concern, but the scope of effort that remains relevant to understanding the DoD’s responsiveness. While not exactly “shirking,” the annual reports from 2000 to 2004 were very similar in content. The reports focused primarily on Taiwan...remaining strictly within the Lott’s portion of the guidelines outlined by the 2000 bill.⁶⁴ Not until 2005 did the report address broader regional potential of China’s military power. Even then, those reluctant changes came as a result of significant and repeated pressure from the Director of the Office of Net Assessment, Andrew Marshall, who commissioned a close advisor, Michael Pillsbury, to wargame scenarios against the PRC nearly five years previous.⁶⁵ Eventually, the reports incorporated Marshall’s recommendation. PRC scholars even recognize the narrow focus of these reports and slight change in perspective found in the latest reports.⁶⁶

Whether this myopic behavior was more a reflection of the limited availability of information on PRC military capabilities and strategies or the unwillingness of the DoD to embrace the full intent of the law (i.e., provide Congress with necessary information

⁶⁴ Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report on the Military Power of the People’s Republic of China* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2000–2006).

⁶⁵ John Barry, “Battle Plan,” *Newsweek*, 1 January 2000.

⁶⁶ Interview by author, 8 June 2006, Shanghai, China with an anonymous professor at a predominant university; and Interview by author, 9 June 2006, Shanghai, China with Zhang Jiadong, Lecturer and Assistant Director, Center for American Studies, Fudan University.

concerning the capabilities and intentions of the PRC to allow for proper congressional oversight) remains up for debate. In either case, it is evident that the military modernization efforts in the PRC in the twenty-first century have produced capabilities that go beyond the Taiwan scenario and therefore should have been encapsulated in these annual reports well before 2006.⁶⁷

A review of these first two sections of P.L. 106-65, while not directly focused on the military relationship between the United States and the PRC, provides insight into the politically charged context in which China-focused sections of this law were developed. Congress at the time feared the President's growing engagement with China was exposing some of the nation's most valuable secrets and technological advantages to unnecessary risks. As a critique of Clinton's active foreign policy stance regarding the PRC, sections 914 and 1202 were developed by the Republican Congress as a signal to the President that it wanted to keep a well-informed eye on the executive's efforts. Much like his predecessor President Bush, Clinton was moving forward as though foreign relations policy was solely the executive's prerogative.⁶⁸ Congress would hear nothing of it and moved forcefully to interject itself back into the process.

3. Section 1201, Limitations on Military-to-Military Exchanges and Contacts with the Chinese People's Liberation Army

The public comments and deliberations related to the above-mentioned sections of the law are indicative of the political overtones seen throughout the legislative cycle in 1999. Those partisan overtures carried through to the most relevant part of P.L. 106-65: Section 1201, which contained direct language about Sino-American military-to-military relations. Specifically, this section placed several prohibitions on military exchanges and contacts. According to this law, the SECDEF may not approve any contacts that would create a national security risk due to an inappropriate exposure in the following areas:

⁶⁷ Bill Gertz, "Chinese Military Buildup Reaches Beyond Taiwan," *The Washington Times*, 20 July 2005. David Shambaugh, *Modernizing China's Military: Progress, Problems and Prospects* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002); and David Shambaugh, ed., *Power Shift: China and Asia's New Dynamics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005). These last two works provide additional information.

⁶⁸ Warren I. Cohen, *America's Response to China: A History of Sino-American Relations*, 4th ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 220–1.

1. Force projection operations.
2. Nuclear operations.
3. Advanced combined-arms and joint combat operations.
4. Advanced logistical operations.
5. Chemical and biological defense and other capabilities related to weapons of mass destruction.
6. Surveillance and reconnaissance operations.
7. Joint warfighting experiments and other activities related to a transformation in warfare.
8. Military space operations.
9. Other advanced capabilities of the Armed Forces.
10. Arms sales or military-related technology transfers.
11. Release of classified or restricted information.
12. Access to a Department of Defense laboratory.⁶⁹

But what were the origins of this list and the reasons behind the China-focused provisions in the law? The deliberations concerning this act point to the *Report of the Select Committee on U.S. National Security and Military/Commercial Concerns with the People's Republic of China* (H.R. 105-851),⁷⁰ commonly known as the Cox Commission Report. This report contained the findings of more than fifteen months of investigation into the reported espionage by Chinese officials at defense laboratories in the 1970s, 80s and 90s. In short, the commission concluded that the Chinese had acquired nuclear secrets from these laboratories over a three decade period with the most substantial breeches occurring in the 90s.⁷¹

While many of the deliberations related to the drafting and passage of P.L. 106-65 cited the Cox Commission Report as the foundation for many of the requirements and restrictions in the law, none of the specific requirements outlined in Section 1201

⁶⁹ Public Law 106-65, *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000*, sec. 1201, “Limitations on Military-to-Military Exchanges and Contacts with the Chinese People’s Liberation Army,” 5 October 1999.

⁷⁰ U.S. Congress, House, *Report of the Select Committee on U.S. National Security and Military/Commercial Concerns with the People's Republic of China*, submitted by Mr. Cox of California, Chairman, 105th Cong., 2d sess., H. Rpt. 105-851, 3 January 1999.

⁷¹ Chuck McCutcheon, “With Cox Report’s Release, Struggle for Consensus Begins,” *CQ Weekly* (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 29 May 1999): 1251.

included and of the report's thirty-eight recommendations.⁷² However, given the nuclear focus of the espionage efforts by the Chinese items two, five and twelve on the list of prohibited contacts outlined above seem plausibly related. The rationale for the other prohibitions, however, seems less obvious. If the Cox Commission Report was not the source, how did these items make it into the act?

Section 1201 of P.L. 106-65 originated in the House of Representatives. Introduced by Republican Representative Tom DeLay (R-TX), the final verbiage was nearly unaltered from the original amendment proposed on 27 May 1999; relatively early in the legislative cycle.⁷³ This section provides an interesting example of partisan nature of the deliberations throughout the legislative cycle. There was a clear split along party lines concerning this section of the bill.

Of the 434 words found in DeLay's portion of the section, less than 10 percent were changed in the final version of the bill. Of those changes made, most were *additions* or word *substitutions*. Only three words were removed to change the reporting portion of this section from a "five-year plan"⁷⁴ to "a plan for future contacts and exchanges."⁷⁵ Why then, did Democratic Representative Underwood (D-Guam) comment near the end of the legislative cycle that, "the Conference Report strips the most *offensive aspects* of the DeLay amendment that was adopted on the floor that would have prohibited constructive military to military contacts"?⁷⁶ Although there was great debate

⁷² Deliberations on the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 from 24 May 1999 through 15 September 1999 in both the House and Senate included numerous references to the Cox Commission Report. Samples can be found in H. Rpt. 106-162, H. Rpt. 106-166, S. Rpt. 6073, S. Rpt. 5982, S. Rpt. 6160, H. Rpt. 106-175, H. Rpt. 3872, H4140, and H8295. For a complete list of the commission's recommendations see U.S. Congress, House, *Report of the Select Committee on U.S. National Security and Military/Commercial Concerns with the People's Republic of China*, submitted by Mr. Cox of California, Chairman, 105th Cong., 2d sess., H. Rpt. 105-851, 3 January 1999.

⁷³ U.S. Congress, House, *Providing for the Consideration of H.R. 1401, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 [to Accompany H.R.195]*, 106th Cong., 1st sess., (26 May 1999), H. Rpt. 106-166.

⁷⁴ U.S. Congress, House, *Providing for the Consideration of H.R. 1401, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 [to Accompany H.R.195]*, 106th Cong., 1st sess., (26 May 1999), H. Rpt. 106-166.

⁷⁵ Public Law 106-65, *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000*, sec. 1201, "Limitations on Military-to-Military Exchanges and Contacts with the Chinese People's Liberation Army," 5 October 1999.

⁷⁶ U.S. Congress, House, *Conference Report on S. 1059, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000*, 106th Cong., 1st sess., *Congressional Record*, vol. 145, no. 120, daily ed. (15 September 1999), H. Rpt. 8295.

over the benefits and risks associated with curtailing military exchanges with the PLA, it is hard to argue that DeLay's original proposal contained "offensive aspects" given the fact that only the "five-year plan" phrase was removed. It appears that partisan efforts to discredit the Majority Whip's proposal extended to the end of the legislative cycle after a conference report was produced, much too late to affect change in the bill.⁷⁷

A complementary amendment was offered by Senator John Warner (R-VA) the same day DeLay offered his amendment.⁷⁸ Although DeLay's amendment required the annual reporting of military contacts, Warner's amendment required a one-time report on military contacts from 1993 to 2000.⁷⁹ Not surprisingly the Warner amendment only required historical reporting through the Clinton Administration's tenure. In the aftermath of the Cox Commission Report where the executive (Democrats) and legislative (Republican majority) branches scrambled to place blame for the Chinese espionage in defense labs, the duration of Warner's reporting requirement provides evidence of partisan politics at work in the crafting of this bill, as it precisely coincides with President Clinton's tenure in office.

4. Summary

Sections 914, 1202 and 1201 are clear examples of the influence of domestic politics on the shaping of Sino-American military relations policies and indicate military responsiveness to congressional requirements. The crafting of these portions of the legislation is consistent with Allison and Zelikow's, Kingdon's, and Feaver's conclusions about the roles of the various actors in the development and implementation of foreign relations policies. Although the impetus for the increased attention given to the PRC during the deliberations of the FY00 NDAA came from the Cox Commission Report, the requirements outlined in sections 914, 1201 and 1202 were marginally related to the espionage events. *The Cox Report appears to have been a matter of convenience for*

⁷⁷ "China Spying," *Congressional Quarterly Almanac* (Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1999), 9–14.

⁷⁸ U.S. Congress, Senate, *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000*, 106th Cong., 1st sess., S. 1059, *Congressional Record*, vol. 145, no. 77, daily ed. (27 May 1999), S6160.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

partisan politics to affect change in the military relations policies of the United States towards China. Given that the requirements outlined in sections 914, 1201 and 1202 were not part the Cox Commission's thirty-eight recommendations, evidence suggests a more political motivation behind the newly introduced sections.⁸⁰ While Chinese espionage into the United State's most sensitive military facilities warranted concern, Congress' actions seemed equally motivated by partisan politics. Despite the recurring praise for the bipartisan approach used by Members of Congress in crafting this legislation, attempts to blame the Democratic administration for the shortcomings that led to the espionage events are hard to miss.

B. PRESIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION CHANGES

Aside from the politics infused in the crafting of the FY00 NDAA, changes in presidential administrations also influenced the substance of Sino-American military relations policies and often resulted in changes in military responsiveness towards those policy changes. Since the inception of informal relations between the United States and the PRC during the early 1970s the senior executive has played a critical role in the overall foreign relations between the United States and the PRC, but a more limited role in the direct dealings of the military relationship. Before examining the changes in the military-to-military relationship between the United States and the PRC during the Clinton and Bush eras, it is important to examine the founding of the state-to-state relationship under President Nixon and the development of military relations from the 1970s through 1989.

Starting in 1969, by order of President Nixon, the United States began to secretly explore options of diplomatic recognition of the PRC.⁸¹ Travel and trade restrictions that had been enforced since the Korean War were lifted that same year.⁸² Within two years

⁸⁰ U.S. Congress, House, *Report of the Select Committee on U.S. National Security and Military/Commercial Concerns with the People's Republic of China*, submitted by Mr. Cox of California, Chairman, 105th Cong., 2d sess., H. Rpt. 105-851, 3 January 1999, chap. 11.

⁸¹ *National Security Study Memorandum 14, US-China Policy*. Issued by President Nixon on 5 February 1969 to the Secretaries of State and Defense and the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Retrieved from Declassified Documents Reference System, (accessed 23 October 2006).

⁸² Cohen, *America's Response to China: A History of Sino-American Relations*, 196.

President Nixon, as articulated in his *Second Annual Report to the Congress on United States Foreign Policy*,⁸³ indicated his desire to withdraw the United States' opposition to the PRC taking the United Nations (UN) seat by writing, "I wish to make it clear that the United States is prepared to see the People's Republic of China play a constructive role in the family of nations."⁸⁴

Although Nixon's actions met resistance in Congress by several members who feared the changes in policy meant cutting off Taiwan, Nixon continued to move towards a conciliatory relationship with mainland China.⁸⁵ His statements and actions opened the door to the PRC taking the rightful seat for China in the international community and founded Sino-American informal relations. While military-to-military relations took several years to develop, one central figure played a vital role in these early years that would eventually lead to a foundation for military relations between these two nations. That man was George Herbert Walker Bush.

As one of the greatest advocates for an increased relationship with the PRC, Bush influenced the relationship well in advance of his presidency. When the United States cleared the way for the PRC to assume the UN seat from Taiwan by no longer opposing such a change, Bush was the United States' Ambassador to the UN. Soon after, informal Sino-American relations were established and Bush assumed duties as Chief of the U.S. Liaison Office (*de facto* Ambassador) to the PRC where he served in Peking from 1974–76.⁸⁶ Immediately following this post, Bush moved to the United States' lead intelligence agency.

While serving as the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Bush was selected to be Ronald Reagan's running mate in the 1980 Presidential election. Given

⁸³ *Second Annual Report to the Congress on United States Foreign Policy*, 25 February 1971. John Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online], Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=3324>. (accessed 22 December 2006).

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ William B. Dickinson, Jr., ed., *China and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 2d ed. (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 1973), 3–4.

⁸⁶ Biography of George Herbert Walker Bush. <http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/biosandphotos/presbushbio.php> (accessed 22 December 2006).

Bush's experiences in and with China, this move for Bush appeared to be favorable to the Sino-American relationship. However, during the election campaign Reagan signaled his opposition to the Shanghai Communiqué⁸⁷ and vowed to reestablish relations with Taiwan.⁸⁸ With a personal history with many of the PRC's senior leaders, Bush responded quickly by flying to China himself to console his longtime friend Deng Xiaoping.⁸⁹ Despite Reagan's views that the United States had stronger interests in solid relations with Taiwan than with the PRC,⁹⁰ Bush used his established relationships with PRC leaders like Deng and his new post as Vice President to preserve an amicable relationship until he assumed the reins as President in 1989.

Bush's views of Sino-American relations were more in line with Kissinger and Nixon.⁹¹ Throughout his tenure as Vice President and later as President, Bush focused on a strategic relationship with China, ignoring many of the offensive aspects of the PRC's governance such as human rights violations and treatment of political dissidents.⁹² With the Soviet Union as the common threat, the United States and the PRC avoided confrontation over such "minor" issues to ensure a cooperative environment continued as long as the Soviets posed a threat.

It was during the early 1980s that military relations with the PRC began. Despite Reagan's campaign comments, military contacts throughout the 80s were healthy. In 1985 alone, there were twenty-three such exchanges between the United States and the PRC including trips by the CJCS, Assistant Secretary of the Navy and Air Force Chief of

⁸⁷ The Shanghai Communiqué as it has been commonly called was the first Joint Communiqué between the United States and the PRC issued on 27 February 1972. In this document then President Nixon and PRC Chairman Mao Zedong vowed to work towards normalized relations, foresaw the withdraw of American forces from Taiwan, and came to an agreement on the "One China" policy. This document can be found at <http://www.nwc.navy.mil/apsg/communiques.htm> (accessed 24 May 2006).

⁸⁸ Henry B. Gass, *Sino-American Security Relations: Expectations and Realities* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1984), 7.

⁸⁹ Cohen, *America's Response to China: A History of Sino-American Relations*, 211.

⁹⁰ Ding Xinghao, "The Sino-American Relationship: A Chinese Perspective," in Jurgen Domes and others, *After Tiananmen Square: Challenges for the Chinese-American Relationship* (New York: Brassey's Inc., 1990), 88.

⁹¹ Cohen, *America's Response to China: A History of Sino-American Relations*, 211.

⁹² Cohen, *America's Response to China: A History of Sino-American Relations*, 211–13.

Staff.⁹³ From 1983 to 1988 the SECDEF traveled to the PRC on three occasions and hosted a PRC delegation in the United States on at least one occasion.⁹⁴ “American and Chinese military commanders who fought against one another during the Korean War crisscrossed the Pacific, offering toasts to the friendship between the PLA and the American armed forces.”⁹⁵

Yet, military contacts were not the only substantial aspects of the Sino-American relationship. During this same period, arms sales and technology transfers to the PRC were unprecedented. Whereas the first few years of the Reagan Administration presented hurdles and obstacles, the mid-80s were a time of flourishing foreign military sales cooperation as Reagan loosened restrictions on high-tech transfers to the PRC. Commercial entities jumped at the opportunity to sell to the once-closed PRC. From 1982 to 1985, export sales leaped from \$500 million to over \$5 billion.⁹⁶

But even as the cold war began to fade in the late 1980s and the Soviet-threat that tied the PRC and the United States together began to wane, Bush held fast to a friendly relationship with the PRC. As the early events of Tiananmen Square unfolded in May of 1989, Bush was notably silent. He was reluctant to speak out against the Deng regime in a manner that might threaten decades of work to build a substantive relationship. But when the massacre of student and worker demonstrators happened on 3 and 4 June 1989 Bush was forced to respond with condemnation.⁹⁷ For military relations this event would

⁹³ Department of Defense, Defense Intelligence Agency, *United States-China Military Relations, 1979–1985: Analysis and Chronology* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Intelligence Agency, 2 January 1986). Retrieved from Declassified Documents Reference System (DDRS), (accessed 23 October 2006). Although the title indicates data from 1979–1985 were included, the redacted version available through DDRS contained only the 1985 data.

⁹⁴ Department of Defense, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, *Talker for Meeting with Minister of Defense* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, September 1988). Retrieved from Declassified Documents Reference System (accessed 23 October 2006).

⁹⁵ James Mann, *About Face: A History of America’s Curious Relationship with China, from Nixon and Clinton* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1998), 134.

⁹⁶ Mann, *About Face: A History of America’s Curious Relationship with China, from Nixon and Clinton*, 139–40.

⁹⁷ Cohen, *America’s Response to China: A History of Sino-American Relations*, 217–18.

be the first of many breaks in contact. Almost immediately Bush suspended arms sales to the PRC and cut ties with the PLA.⁹⁸

Bush, however, was not ready to give up on the relationship. With a great appreciation for the importance of the Sino-American relationship against a waning but remaining Soviet threat, coupled with important foreign military sales programs at risk of collapse, Bush risked domestic political criticism and began to reengage the Deng regime only three weeks after the Tiananmen events. Publicly, Bush announced the suspension of senior-level visits.⁹⁹ Secretly, however, Bush sent senior State Department and DoD officials to meet with Deng and others in an effort to reopen avenues of communication between the two nations.¹⁰⁰

In the following months Bush continued to engage the PRC. His attempts to keep communications open were successful. At the President's direction, the State Department encouraged "working contacts with PRC military personnel" as long as they were "kept low-key and low-profile."¹⁰¹ But Bush's attempts to get the Chinese to agree to many of his administration's requests to release Tiananmen detainees and stop arms sales to the Middle East were not as successful. Without public proclamations by the PRC articulating its desire to back off its hard-line stance, Bush was alone in his struggle to salvage the relationship. The American public and Congress were calling for more harsh sanctions against the PRC.

⁹⁸ President, Statement by the President, as found in Telegram 89STATE 177497 sent to the American Embassy in Beijing, China, 5 June 1989. Retrieved from Declassified Documents Reference System (accessed 23 October 2006).

⁹⁹ The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Statement by the Press Secretary (Washington, D.C.: Office of the President of the United States, 20 June 1989). Retrieved from Declassified Documents Reference System (accessed 23 October 2006).

¹⁰⁰ Department of Defense, Office of the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, *Visit by DoD Team* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, Office of the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, 8 August 1989). Retrieved from Declassified Documents Reference System (accessed 23 October 2006); and Department of State, *Contact with Chinese Diplomats and Attachés* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, 8 July 1989). Retrieved from Declassified Documents Reference System (accessed 23 October 2006).

¹⁰¹ Department of State, *Contact with Chinese Diplomats and Attachés* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, 8 July 1989). Retrieved from Declassified Documents Reference System (accessed 23 October 2006).

Despite the State Department's criteria of "low-key and low-profile" contacts, Bush's secret missions to the PRC soon became public and the Democrats in Congress used them as opportunity to rebuke the President and his administration. Further engagement efforts by Bush were viewed unfavorably by many in Congress as a proclamation that foreign affairs with China was under his charge, not Congress.¹⁰²

The obstacles facing Sino-American relations were founded in the aftermath of Tiananmen. Public outrage and domestic politics complicated the Bush Administration's efforts to find a new foundation for a long-term relationship. The PRC rebuffed calls for democratic reform and dismissed accusations concerning the Tiananmen incident. The cooperation between these two nations remained rocky. Tied in with political battles over human rights, Most Favored Nation (MFN) status, missile technology proliferation and intellectual property infringement, military relations took a back seat on the President's agenda. The continuous battles with Congress from 1990 to 1992 would come to a critical juncture during the presidential campaign in 1992.¹⁰³

1. President William Jefferson Clinton

Democrats labeled the Republican Administration as "soft on China."¹⁰⁴ Clinton's campaign criticized Bush for supporting a Chinese regime that advocated human rights violations, continued to export missile and nuclear technologies and failed to meet its vowed commitments concerning trade and intellectual property reforms. When Clinton won the election in 1992, he continued his stance against the leadership in Beijing and pressed for stronger measures to show American resolve for a change in the practices of the PRC regime.¹⁰⁵ Clinton's position was more a reflection of campaign politics than any change in the international order. As some PRC scholars acknowledged political leaders often chose the opposite stance on certain issues simply to look different than their political rival.

¹⁰² Cohen, *America's Response to China: A History of Sino-American Relations*, 220–1.

¹⁰³ Kerry Dumbaugh, *CRS Report for Congress: China-U.S. Relations* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 11 January 1994), 1,

¹⁰⁴ Cohen, *America's Response to China: A History of Sino-American Relations*, 227.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 229.

Because of the cycle of electoral politics, when a new president comes to power, he always inclines to show differences of policy, distinguished from the former president. This is done out of the purpose of keeping the promise made in the campaign and rewarding the supporters and consolidating his political base. It is done also for the sake of clarifying his political ideas.¹⁰⁶

Similar to the latter part of the Bush Administration, Clinton was not immune to the struggle with Congress over the Sino-American relationship. Divisions over how to deal with a less-than-cooperative PRC existed. Many advocated continued and increased sanctions for the PRC's missile proliferation while others who were more concerned with commercial enterprises pulled at the President to lean towards a more accommodating policy. The commercial sectors needed latitude to deal with China or they faced collapse. Similarly, the DoD "missed the pre-Tiananmen contacts with PLA officers. In general, senior officials of the DoD...were ready to resume contact with their Chinese counterparts."¹⁰⁷

Faced with a sluggish economy and the demands of the DoD, Clinton leaned toward those in favor of a cautious, but engagement-oriented policy. By November 1993 military-to-military contacts resumed for the first time since the 1989 Tiananmen Square incident when Assistant Secretary of Defense Charles Freeman visited the PRC.¹⁰⁸ Contacts grew steadily. By 1998, senior level interactions doubled from 13 visits in 1994 to 26 with a five-year average of nearly 19 per year.¹⁰⁹ Military relations were separated from the political battles over MFN, human rights, intellectual property infringement and political repression. The events of 1995–1996 confirmed this assertion.

In the summer of 1995, the PLA began military exercises in the Taiwan Strait. Although the exercise itself was only a week long, the tensions and repercussions lasted throughout the rest of 1995 and into early 1996. Clinton responded to the PRC's

¹⁰⁶ Zhang Liping, "The Models of Power Shifts: An Explanation for the Cycle of Ups-and-Downs in Sino-US Relations," *Pacific Focus*, 1 (Spring 2004). http://ias.cass.cn/en/show_project_1s.asp?id=492 (accessed 9 January 2007).

¹⁰⁷ Cohen, *America's Response to China: A History of Sino-American Relations*, 230.

¹⁰⁸ Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress, 2007*, 26.

¹⁰⁹ Derived from Ibid., 26–42.

aggressive overtures by sending an aircraft carrier to the region in an effort to show American resolve against any forcible change to the current cross-strait situation. Undeterred, the PLA massed its forces on the coast near Taiwan. Clinton responded by sending two carrier battle groups to an area near Taiwan in what was the first confrontation between American and Chinese forces since Nixon opened communications with the CCP in the early 1970s.¹¹⁰

On the basis of a purely international perspective, one would have expected military relations and senior level contact would have ceased during this period, but thanks to the diligent work of Clinton's senior leaders and the foundation laid out by his predecessor military contacts continued. As seen in Figure 2, the United States' trips to the PRC throughout the Taiwan Strait Crises actually rose. U.S. trips to the PRC more than doubled from 1995 to 1996, most of which were led by senior defense leaders at the Assistant Secretary, Deputy Secretary and four-star General levels.

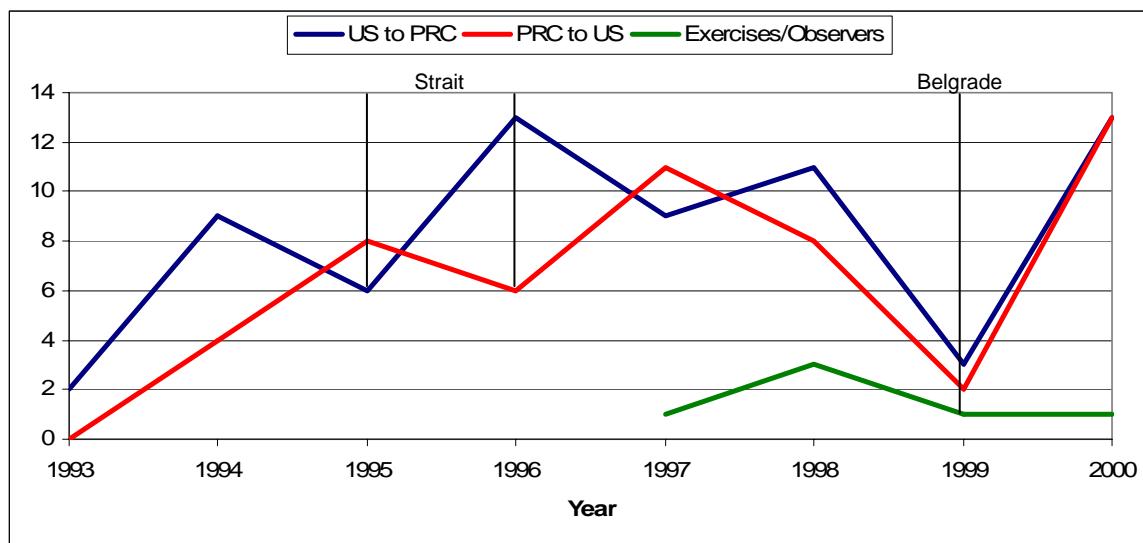


Figure 2. Sino-American Military Contacts, 1993–2000¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ Paul H. B. Godwin, "Force and Diplomacy: China Prepares for the Twenty-First Century," in Samuel S. Kim, ed., *China and the World: Chinese Foreign Policy Faces the New Millennium* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998), 174.

¹¹¹ Derived from Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress*, 2007. This chart captures military exchanges and contacts from 1993 to 2000 including a wide range of senior-level visits such as politically appointed DoD officials, four-star generals, Service Secretaries and Chiefs of Staff, ship visits. Also included are functional exchanges such as those focused on POW/MIA repatriation efforts, GPS surveys and mapping and Air Traffic Control interoperability.

A closer examination of the internationally significant events during the Clinton Administration yields more evidence that domestic factors played a more dominant role in shaping the military relationship. Considering the multitude of internationally significant events from 1993 to 1996,¹¹² some of which involved direct military confrontation between the United States and the PRC, it is surprising that contacts increased from 1993 through 1998. If these internationally significant events were the dominant forces affecting military contacts and exchanges, one would have expected a sharp decline in these military contacts throughout the mid-1990s.

Not until 1999 does it appear that internationally significant events had an impact on military relations during the Clinton Administration. After the NATO-led air mission bombed the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, military contacts entered a sharp decline. The PRC immediately declared the suspension of military contacts and denied US ship visits to the PRC for the next four months.¹¹³ But those public statements and actions concerning ship visits were the only visible signs of change. Less than two days after the bombing, the PRC went forward with sending a PLA delegation to Edwards Air Force Base in California to discuss “daily planning, integration and control of civilian and military [air] operations.”¹¹⁴

The United States was quick to restore ties as well. By November, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense and PACOM’s Director for Strategic Planning and Policy traveled to the PRC to discuss officially reopening ties. In December of 1999, both nations participated in the previously planned Hong Kong annual search and rescue exercise (HKSAREX 99) as they had in years previous. Less than eight months after the bombing, full military exchanges resumed when the PLA’s Deputy Chief of Staff,

¹¹² In 1993, a PRC cargo ship, called the Yinhe, was suspected of delivering weapons grade chemicals to Iran and was inspected by the United States and Saudi Arabia. In 1994, a U.S. aircraft carrier battle group tracked a PLA nuclear submarine. The PLA Air Force responded with fighter aircraft sent towards the battle group. In 1995 the PLA Navy occupied Mischief Reef in a challenge to the Philippines. In 1995 and 1996, as already discussed, tensions between the PRC and Taiwan escalated rapidly and gained attention and support from the United States.

¹¹³ Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress*, 2007, 43.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 44.

Lieutenant General Xiong Guangkai visited Washington, D.C. in January 2000.¹¹⁵ That following year, visits hit an all-time peak of twenty-seven contacts, exchanges, and exercises, many of which included the highest officials in both the PRC's Ministry of Defense (MOD) and the DoD (see Figure 2).

It appears the influence of domestic factors was only usurped by international events for a period of less than one year. As Kingdon argues, the influence of the president and his appointees is significant. Clinton's advocacy for an overall foreign relations policy of 'comprehensive engagement' with the PRC appears to have been successfully reflected in the military relations policies and practices of the DoD who continued to engage the PRC even during or immediately following crises.

2. President George W. Bush

The struggle to find a foundation for a long-term relationship with the PRC that was immune from the fluctuations in attention given to human rights concerns, unfair trade practices and the ever-present Taiwan question dogged President George W. Bush as well. Following his assumption of the presidency, Bush continued to publicly support continued engagement with the PRC. Following the attacks on 9-11, Bush actively sought the support of the PRC in the war on terrorism, citing China and other Asia nations as "important partners in the global coalition against terror."¹¹⁶ In his first two years as President, Bush traveled to the PRC three times and hosted Hu Jintao at least once.¹¹⁷ Yet, the Bush Administration had a mixed message and a rocky start. Unfortunately, despite Bush's engagement-oriented stance, 2000 was the last year that high-level talks/exchanges occurred at such an unprecedented level. As Figure 3 clearly indicates, Sino-American military contacts took a steep downturn in 2001.

¹¹⁵ Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress, 2007*, 44–5.

¹¹⁶ *The President's News Conference With President Jiang Zemin of China in Shanghai, China*, 19 October 2001, John Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online], Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=64116> (accessed 1 February 2007).

¹¹⁷ Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress, 2007*, 49–53.

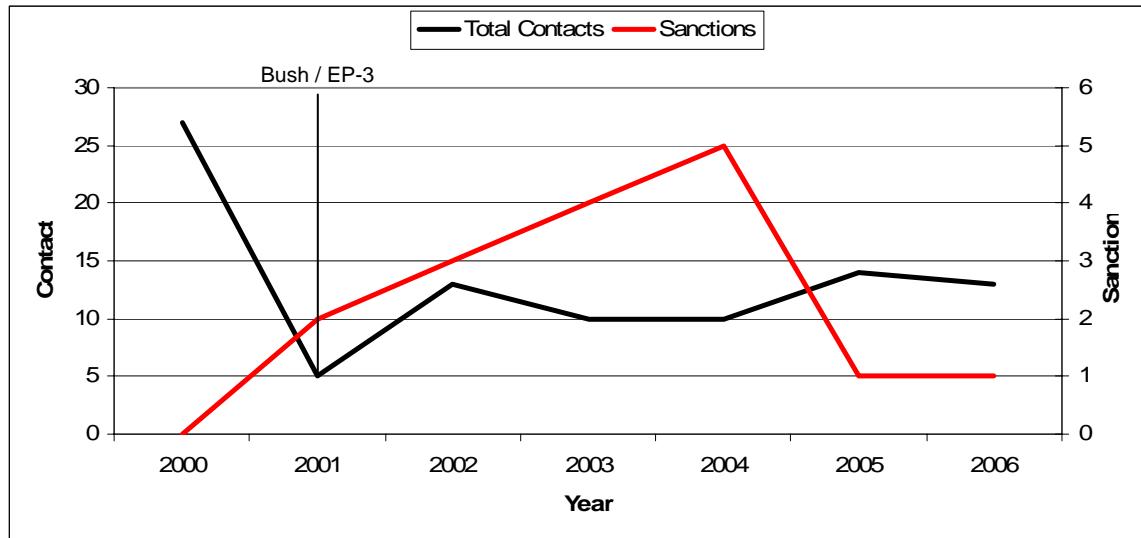


Figure 3. Total Sino-American Military Contacts, 2000–2006¹¹⁸

Unlike previous crises, such as the Taiwan Strait in the mid-90s and the Belgrade bombing 1999, there was no rebound in contacts over the long term. While the EP-3 incident is a natural explanation for such a dramatic decline, consideration of other, longer-term evidence suggests other factors impacted the relationship in a more enduring fashion.

Throughout the EP-3 incident the Bush Administration was clearly involved in direct negotiations with the PRC for the release of the crew and the aircraft itself. But, there are no indications that the President himself made any attempts to call Jiang Zemin in order to aid the stalemate.¹¹⁹ Making a tense period worse, in late April 2001, when asked about the United States’ position on Taiwan, Bush declared the United States

¹¹⁸ Derived from Shirley Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 14 July 2006), 26–61; Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report to Congress Pursuant to Section 1201(e) of the FY2000 National Defense Authorization Act* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2006); and Adam R. Cole, “U.S., China Complete Combined Search, Rescue Exercise,” *Armed Forces Press Service*, 22 November 2006. <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=2194> (accessed 29 January 2007). This chart compares all high-level and functional exchanges captured in Kan with the frequency of sanctions imposed on the PRC by the Bush administration for a variety of weapons proliferation issues.

¹¹⁹ Remarks Calling on China To Return the United States Military Crew and Surveillance Aircraft, 3 April 2001, John Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online], Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=45688> (accessed 30 January 2007).

would do “whatever it took to help Taiwan defend herself.”¹²⁰ Years of strategic ambiguity over the ‘one-China’ policy were abruptly halted in this simple response. The President’s senior advisors and diplomats quickly responded to ‘clarify’ Bush’s remarks and put the PRC at ease, but the effects were hard to mitigate with a few personal assurances from the DoD and State Department.

Other circumstances forced Bush’s hand to impose sanctions for a variety of events including accusations of PRC proliferation of chemical weapons and cruise missiles to Iran as well as missile proliferation to Pakistan. Between 2001 and June 2006 the Bush Administration imposed sanctions against the PRC twelve times for proliferation of chemical weapons, cruise missiles and conventional weapons to Iran.¹²¹ Military relations suffered accordingly. From 2001 through 2006, fewer than fifteen visits occurred annually...almost half the level seen under Clinton (see Figure 3). With the 1999 Belgrade bombing and 2001 EP-3 incident long past, one would have expected a quick rebound and resumption of contacts at a level similar to the 1990s, yet contacts under the Bush Administration would continue to lag.

3. Summary

The ability of the executive branch to influence the foreign relations policies of the United States is unmistakably momentous. Over the last four decades, American Presidents have broadened and narrowed the Sino-American relationship for a wide variety of reasons, some of which had little to do with anything more than domestic politics. Intertwined with the overall policy stance changes from ‘containment’ to ‘engagement’ from one administration to another was the military-to-military relations policy between the MOD and the DoD.

Zhang Liping described the evolution of American foreign policy throughout any given president’s tenure and during the transition from one administration to another very clearly.

¹²⁰ Kelly Wallace, “Bush pledges whatever it takes to defend Taiwan,” *CNN Online*, 25 April 2001. <http://archives.cnn.com/2001/ALLPOLITICS/04/24/bush.taiwan.abc/> (accessed 5 February 2007).

¹²¹ Derived from Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress*, 2006, 50–61.

Generally speaking, the first year can be termed the ‘intern year,’ particularly for a new president who lacks in the diplomatic experience and cannot understand the complex[ity] of Sino-US relations...The second and third years can be called ‘the window of opportunity’ to improve the relations between China and the US. During the period, the new president feels at home in the White House and has accumulated some sense through the summits. Now that his appointees have filled the positions, he has access to information necessary to decision-making. He then has a leeway power in handling foreign policy. In the fourth year of the term, the president has become ‘lame duck’ and he has fewer resources to take the risky and aggressive maneuver. The president who wants to campaign for reelection sometimes makes ‘irrational’ policy. As the head of the political party, he must defend his policy and try to leave nothing wrong for the challenging party to blame.¹²²

The executive-led shifts in policy from 1969 to present day fit into this description. Although President Clinton vowed to take a more hard line stance with the PRC during his election campaign and during his first term, Figure 2 suggests otherwise. From 1993 to 1998, military contacts increased steadily. Even through the Taiwan Strait Crises in 1995 and 1996 military contacts increased. Not until the mistaken bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade in 1999 did contacts significantly drop and in that case it was the PRC, not the United States who publicly declared the suspension of contacts.¹²³

Again, despite Clinton’s vows for a stronger stance on PRC human rights and proliferation policies his use of sanctions was limited if not absent. As Cohen argued, the influences of commercial enterprise, lobby groups and governmental agencies that favored stronger economic relations won over Clinton’s initial plans for a stronger position.¹²⁴ When Bush assumed the Presidency that trend changed.

In 2001, the mid-year EP-3 incident curtailed military contacts to the lowest levels since contacts resumed in 1993. While those contacts rebounded shortly thereafter they never reached the levels of exchange and contact seen during the Clinton

¹²² Zhang Liping, *The Models of Power Shifts: An Explanation for the Cycle of Ups-and-Downs in Sino-US Relations*.

¹²³ Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress*, 2007, 43.

¹²⁴ Cohen, *America’s Response to China: A History of Sino-American Relations*, 231.

Administration. From 2001 to 2006, Bush publicly called for continued engagement with the PRC, specifically calling for increased strategic military dialogues and exchanges.¹²⁵ Given Bush's public statements one would have expected a marked rebound of contacts to levels similar to the 1990s. Yet, with the decrease in contacts it appears other factors and/or actors influenced the military relations between these two nations. In the case of the Bush Administration, it was possible that the translation of the overall foreign policy stance of engagement did not translate into a DoD military relations practice that reflected the overall policy or, consistent with Allison and Zelikow's description of bureaucratic resistance, the DoD bureaucracy distorted the outcomes in such a way that they no longer reflected the President's intent. It appears that unlike Clinton's tenure, senior defense leaders under Bush had their own thoughts on what levels of exchange were appropriate given the benefits versus risks debate.

C. SENIOR DEFENSE LEADERSHIP CHANGES

The changes in congressional majority and presidential administrations had obvious effects on the overall foreign relations policies of the United States. Yet changes within the DoD also had impacts on the development of those policies and more importantly on their implementation in the military realm. Given the proximity of the most senior officials within the DoD to the political actors in Washington, D.C., their nomination by the executive and confirmation by the Senate, there is little surprise that the ebbs and flows in military relations often reflected partisan shifts in power.¹²⁶ While many of the senior defense officials, specifically general and flag officers, remain staunchly apolitical, the overwhelming presence of D.C. politics makes immunity from partisan influences unlikely. With more than twenty political appointees in OSD and

¹²⁵ *The President's News Conference...*; and "Chinese, U.S. Presidents Agree to Further Promote Ties," *China View*, 19 November 2006.

¹²⁶ For the purposes of this thesis, "senior defense officials" include Secretaries, Under Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, Deputy Assistant Secretaries and four-star Generals within OSD and the Services. For an explanation of the political appointment process, see Cheryl Y. Marcum, *Department of Defense Political Appointments: Positions and Process*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001).

similar numbers in each of the Services charged with civilian oversight of the DoD (coupled with hundreds of other civilian leaders in senior positions), the influence of partisan politics cannot be ignored.

Despite these influences, evidence suggests that some senior officials remained at a distance from the politics of Washington to focus on continuous, constructive engagement at any and every level. The most visible and outspoken military official in this regard has been the CDRUSPACOM. Other leaders, such as the SECDEF and CJCS also played important roles in developing and implementation military-to-military relations with the PRC over the last four decades but seem more responsive to political influences. Each of these posts and their impacts on Sino-American military relations will be evaluated individually.

1. CDRUSPACOM

Of the major actors described in Chapter II, the Commander, US Pacific Command (CDRUSPACOM) is the official with the most equity in preserving a strong and stable military relationship with the PRC. The CDRUSPACOM has responsibility for preparing for conflicts that threaten United States' interest in the largest geographic combatant command within the DoD. Irrespective of the political shifts in Washington the CDRUSPACOM was faced with the diametrically opposed tasks of preparing for military conflict in the Asia-Pacific (which could involve armed conflict against the PRC) and with developing and implementing a favorable military relationship with this possible adversary.

While preparing for the worst and working for the best, the CDRUSPACOM has historically been one of the greatest advocates for increased transparency, cooperation and contact.¹²⁷ Given the vested interest of PACOM who would bear the brunt of the effort to thwart any aggression by the PLA, CDRUSPACOM's calls for mechanisms that reduce the likelihood of conflict appear natural. Admiral Fallon claimed, "In the Asia-

¹²⁷ U.S. Congress, Senate, Armed Services Committee, *Statements of Admirals Blair, Fargo and Fallon, US Navy, Commanders, US Pacific Command, before the Senate Armed Services Committee on US Pacific Command Posture*, 106th - 109th Cong. Each testimony advocated strong Sino-American military relations.

Pacific area, I can think of no other issue that looms as large as the relationship between the U.S. and China.”¹²⁸ In testimony before Congress in 2006, the Commander went further to say,

Given the complex and extensive relationship between the U.S. and PRC and the expressed desire to deepen the military relationship between us by the political leaders of both countries, PACOM has been strongly advocating a reinvigorated military-to-military relationship in a variety of areas. We have sought to focus in areas of common interest but have made clear to PLA leaders that the relationship should be guided by principles of transparency and reciprocity.¹²⁹

...military to military ties have lagged. We are working hard now to change the vector in this area, to encourage Chinese military leaders to substantively engage with us in a more transparent manner. In my discussions with PLA military leaders, they indicated a willingness to reciprocate. It is important to advance our mutual military relationship, not only to ease tension and suspicion but to encourage, by example, Chinese participation in the full range of international engagement.¹³⁰

Only a few weeks later in a speech in April 2006 Admiral Fallon continued to express his concerns over reduced contact between the DoD and MOD since 2001. From his perspective, “without these contacts fears and assumptions abound. There is a need to prevent miscalculations of PRC and United States intent.”¹³¹

Admiral Fallon’s comments are consistent with his recent predecessors who advocated increased military-to-military contact, exchange and cooperation.¹³² Naturally, by their position, these commanders had direct contact with and interest in China relations and therefore would be expected to be strong advocates of increased ties,

¹²⁸ Admiral William Fallon, Commander, Pacific Forces, *Media Press Conference*, Shenyang, China, 15 May 2006.

¹²⁹ U.S. Congress, Senate, Armed Services Committee, *Statement of Admiral William Fallon, US Navy, Commander, US Pacific Command, before the Senate Armed Services Committee on US Pacific Command Posture*, 109th Cong., 2d sess., 7 March 2006.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Admiral William Fallon, Commander, Pacific Forces, *Speech before the Pacific Council and Asia Foundation at the Marines’ Memorial Club and Hotel*, San Francisco, CA, 28 April 2006 (author in attendance).

¹³² U.S. Congress, Senate, Armed Services Committee, *Statements of Admirals Blair, Fargo and Fallon, US Navy, Commanders, US Pacific Command, before the Senate Armed Services Committee on US Pacific Command Posture*, 106th - 109th Cong. Each testimony advocated strong Sino-American military relations.

cooperation and formal mechanisms established to diffuse crises. In the event of confrontation with the PRC, the CDRUSPACOM would lead the U.S. effort against the PLA and therefore, has the greatest burden of risk when relations subside or when uncontrolled exchanges results in sensitive information transferring from the United States to the PRC. The development of stable relations founded in well-defined objectives and limits, with clear lines of communication and with crisis management mechanisms in place reduce the risk of escalating confrontation as a result of mishaps such as the EP-3 incident.

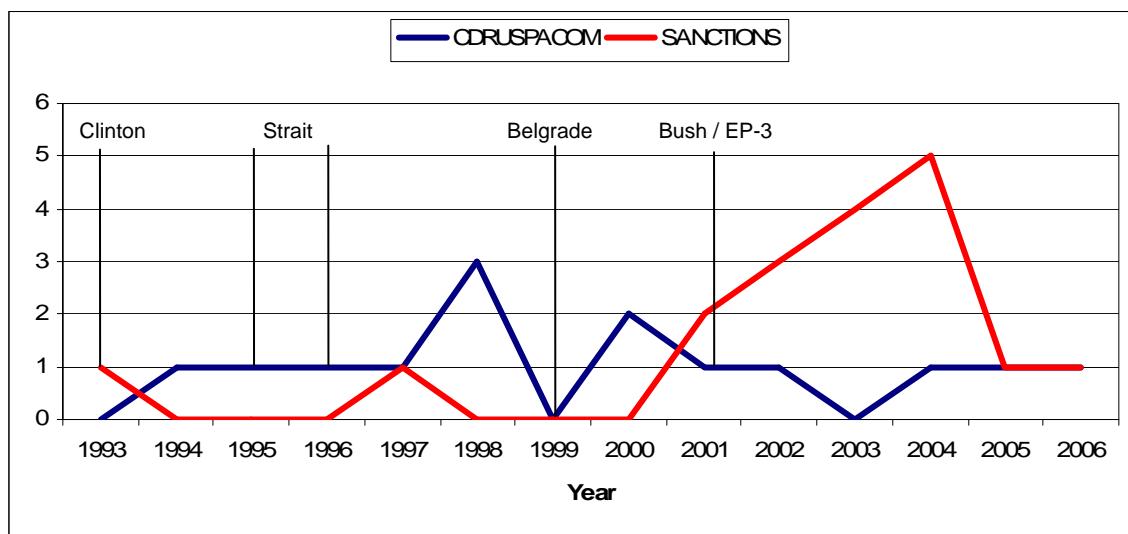


Figure 4. CDRUSPACOM Visits to the PRC¹³³

As Figure 4 indicates, over the tenure of the last six commanders, consistent engagement persisted even through significant international events, increases in U.S.-imposed sanctions, and presidential administration changes. Averaging one visit a year, the CDRUSPACOM has engaged some of the most-senior leaders in the PLA and PRC central government. The two spikes in travel to the PRC can be best explained by examining the details of those visits. The first spike, in 1998, reflects visits by Admiral Prueher. During his first two years as CDRUSPACOM, Prueher travel only once per

¹³³ Derived from Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress*, 2007. This chart compares the frequency of visits to the PRC by the CDRUSPACOM with the frequency of U.S. imposed sanctions against the PRC for a variety of weapons proliferation issues.

year, however, in his last year in this post, Prueher traveled three times in a single year. Considering the Admiral assumed duties as United States' Ambassador to the PRC in 1999,¹³⁴ his increased travels to China appear to be in anticipation of his next post, not a change in his stance as CDRUSPACOM. The second spike in 2000 can more easily be explained as a changing of the guard. In that year, Admiral Fargo assumed command from Admiral Blair. Blair traveled to the PRC just prior to the end of his tour and Fargo traveled within the first few months of his tenure.¹³⁵

Similar to the consistency of CDRUSPACOM visit frequency, United States' ship visits to the PRC remained relatively stable and nearly matched the level of contacts by the CDRUSPACOM himself. As Figure 5 shows, there appears to be a direct correlation between the two levels of contact.

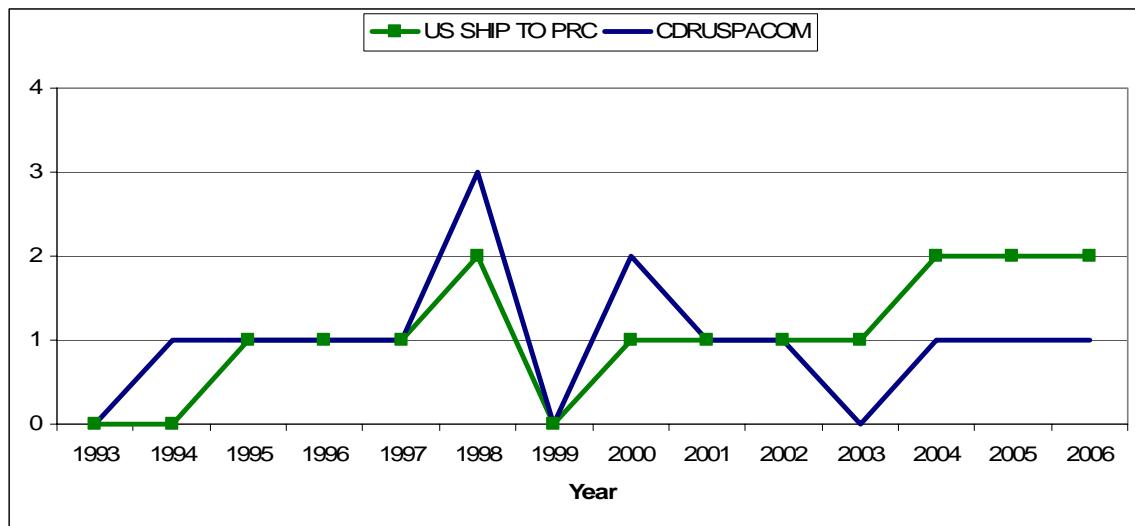


Figure 5. CDRUSPACOM Visits Compared to US Ship Visits to the PRC¹³⁶

¹³⁴ Jamie Dettmer and Timothy W. Maier, "Pruher to Be Nominated as U.S. Ambassador to China," *Insight into the News*, 7 June 1999. http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1571/is_21_15/ai_54852006# (accessed 7 February 2007).

¹³⁵ Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress, 2007*, 45–7.

¹³⁶ Derived from Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress, 2007*; and Shawn E. Burns, "USS Paul F. Foster Completes Visit to Qingdao, China," U.S. Navy Press Service, 28 November 2006. http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_pnav/is_200212/ai_3838920735 (accessed 27 January 2007). Ship visits were defined as a United States vessel entering a PRC harbor. If two ships traveled together to the same port, it was counted as only one visit. If, however, a ship traveled to more than one port during the same voyage, each port was counted as a separate visit.

Even with Fallon's advocacy, and that of his predecessors, PACOM's consistent but stagnant efforts were not without criticism. The media pressed the Commander for more tangible indicators of progress. An Associated Press reporter asked, "the United States and China have been [emphasizing the need for increased transparency] for quite a long time and not made a lot of practical exchanges...did you make any commitments to anything like joint exercises..."¹³⁷ Fallon responded by highlighting the recent contacts between SECDEF, the President and the PRC President over the last year and noting the complexity of working out the details of increased military contacts but failed to acknowledge the limited progress and remaining SECDEF resistance.¹³⁸

Consistent with the conclusions of Kingdon, as well as Allison and Zelikow the CDRUSPACOM has had greater influence on the implementation phase than on policy development. As shown above, when Fallon's wishes appeared to deviate from those in Washington, he was able to continue engagement with the PRC. Removed from much of the politics in Washington the CDRUSPACOM appears to have maintained a steady push for contacts. As seen in Figure 2 during the Clinton Administration, senior defense official contacts steadily increased despite the political battles throughout Clinton's eight-year tenure. Much of that increase can be attributed to the advocacy of the CDRUSPACOM.

2. SECDEF

The SECDEF is the only actor in the chain of command between the CDRUSPACOM and the President.¹³⁹ By his position alone, it is obvious that he has a significant opportunity to impact military relations. In the aftermath of the Tiananmen Square incident it was then SECDEF Cheney who "recommended the defense relationship take the brunt of the punitive cutbacks...the military-to-military relationship

¹³⁷ Fallon, *Media Press Conference*.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ While the CJCS is part of the chain of command between the SECDEF and the combatant commanders, the CJCS does not have Command Authority (COCOM) and therefore, primarily serves in an advisory and coordinating role. COCOM goes directly from the President to the SECDEF to the combatant commanders.

should be suspended so that other aspects of the relationship could be sustained.”¹⁴⁰ His recommendations were approved and implemented accordingly.

However, if one merely uses frequency data to assess the impacts of this actor on Sino-American military relations, one might conclude the SECDEF has not been active in the relationship. As Figure 6 shows, SECDEF trips to the PRC are rare. Since 1993, the SECDEF has traveled to the PRC only five times. If, however, one considers the number of PLA delegations that had audience with the SECDEF during their visit to the United States, those numbers appear more promising for a favorable relationship.

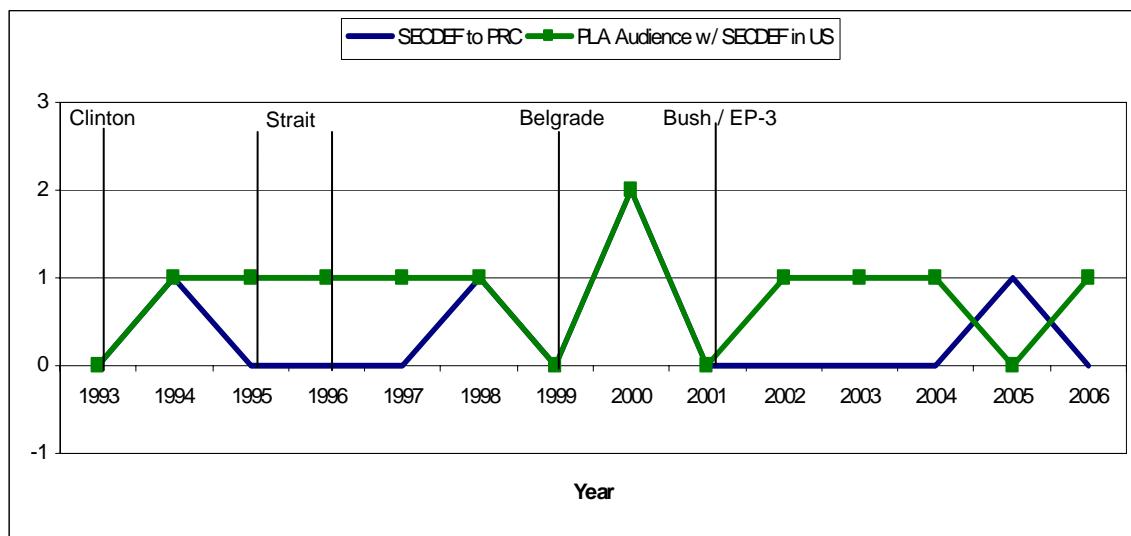


Figure 6. SECDEF Contacts with the PLA¹⁴¹

Going back to SECDEF Perry’s 1994 visit with PLA Deputy Chief of Staff, General Xu Huizi, it is clear that the Secretary supported improved military relations and put himself personally into the equation to achieve such a relationship. A declassified document from OSD to the American Embassy in Beijing concerning Perry’s private meeting with Xu summarized the conversation as follows,

¹⁴⁰ Robert L. Suettinger, *Beyond Tiananmen: The Politics of U.S.-China Relations, 1989-2000* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2003), 67.

¹⁴¹ Derived from Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress, 2007*. This chart captures all SECDEF trips to the PRC from 1998 to 2006 as compared to PRC delegation trips to the United States that gained audience with the SECDEF during their trip.

SECDEF told Xu that one of his objectives as Secretary of Defense is to improve this mutually beneficial relationship with the PLA, and he is heartened by the progress since the important visit by ASD Freeman to Beijing....¹⁴²

By 1998, SECDEF Cohen endorsed “The United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region.” This report called for “comprehensive engagement”¹⁴³ with the PRC. This document stated, “Dialogue and exchanges can reduce misperceptions between our two countries, increase our understanding of Chinese security concerns, and build confidence between our two defense establishments to avoid military accidents and miscalculations.”¹⁴⁴

Similarly, in 2001 DEPSECDEF Wolfowitz’ report to Congress (as directed in Sect 1201 of P.L. 106-65) stated the objectives of Sino-American military relations as

...attempting to foster an environment conducive to frank, open discussion PRC and U.S. delegations conducted several exchanges that complemented the broader efforts to engage the PRC. They were also meant to reduce the likelihood of miscalculation regarding cross-strait issues.¹⁴⁵

The DoD began to realize that open dialogue was growing increasingly important. Yet these public statements and documents projected arrogance by the United States that its values and global views should be embraced by all other nations. But if one favors increased military-to-military relations between the PRC and the United States revised objectives appear necessary. In 2002, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Douglas Feith, made statements that offered an alternative to the ‘influence-oriented’ objectives seen for most of the 1990s. He said,

¹⁴² Department of Defense, Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, *Discussion Between SECDEF and PLA DCGS Xu Huizi* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, 19 August 1994). Retrieved from Declassified Documents Reference System, (accessed 23 October 2006).

¹⁴³ Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of Defense, *The United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1998), 1.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 31.

¹⁴⁵ Department of Defense, Office of the Deputy Secretary of Defense, *Military-to-Military Exchanges with the People’s Liberation Army* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, Office of the Deputy Secretary of Defense, 2001).

...the principal interest is in reducing the risks of mistake, miscalculation, and misunderstanding. If these military-to-military exchanges actually lead to our gaining insights into Chinese thinking and policies and capabilities and the like, and they can gain insights into ours, then it doesn't mean we'll necessarily agree on everything, but it at least means that as we're making our policies, we're making them on the basis of accurate information....And we're in favor of exchanges that will accomplish that purpose. What we're not in favor of are exchanges that are showcase pieces, that suggest that there's real cooperation when there's not real cooperation, or that don't really afford, you know, a significant learning experience to the people participating in the exchanges.¹⁴⁶

Here, the DoD promoted a relationship that appeared more balanced. The previous objective of influencing the PRC seen in previous documents and statements were subsiding and the new direction of the DoD appeared more consistent with the Chinese views on foreign military relations.

Yet a lot of domestic and international events have occurred since Perry's tenure as SECDEF. With the events of 9-11 the influence of the SECDEF on United States policy formulation and development rose to levels unseen in the last thirty years.¹⁴⁷ Specifically, Secretary Rumsfeld's persona and reputation for candor placed increased attention on his views in the media. While many of his comments were naturally highlighted domestically, Rumsfeld's speeches, press conferences and news releases had an audience internationally as well. President Bush's close relationship with Rumsfeld bolstered his status and gave greater weight to his comments as a reflection of not only his personal views,¹⁴⁸ but the views of the entire DoD and in some regard, the United

¹⁴⁶ Department of Defense, *Undersecretary Feith's Media Roundtable on U.S.-China Defense Consultative Talks*, 9 December 2002. www.defenselink.mil (accessed 20 November 2006).

¹⁴⁷ Terrance Hunt, "Bush Gives Rumsfeld Strong Show of Support," *Associated Press Online*, 14 April 2006. <http://web.lexis-nexis.com.libproxy.nps.edu:8080/universe/document?m=6994beb715193be3852bea7e287c49bf&docnum=4&wchp=dGLzVlz-zSkVb&md5=eec98c94bf78d25413f9d9821f37ab2e> (accessed 30 January 2007); and *Remarks Following a Meeting With the Secretary of Defense and an Exchange With Reporters in Crawford, Texas*.

¹⁴⁸ For more information on the role of individual personalities in the shaping of foreign policy, see studies related to Interpersonal Generalization Theory, such as Graham H. Shepard, "Personality Effects on American Foreign Policy, 1969-84: A Second Test of Interpersonal Generalization Theory," *International Studies Quarterly*, 32, no. 1 (March 1998): 91-123.

States as a whole. Subsequently, the “SECDEF’s attitude toward China [as expressed through these public statements] has signals for the PRC.”¹⁴⁹

Because the United States lacks a clear and consistent policy regarding China, influential elite watch official speeches, statements and reports closely to determine just what US policy toward China is or will be. What they see is substantial proof that the United States policy-makers have widely accepted the ‘theory of the China threat.’ What is so frustrating to China’s influential elite is the lack of evidence on which the widespread acceptance of the China threat theory is based.¹⁵⁰

In a speech before the International Institute for Strategic Studies in Singapore in 2005 Rumsfeld’s comments sent strong signals of American concern over China’s military modernization, arms expansion and increased deployments.¹⁵¹ Rumsfeld’s remarks left a big impression in Asia that the United States was becoming increasingly concerned with China’s economic and military modernization. As one Chinese scholar wrote,

At a regional security conference in Singapore in early June of 2005, U.S. Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld argued in his keynote address that China’s investment in missiles and up-to-date military technology posed a risk not only to Taiwan and to American interests, but also to nations across Asia.¹⁵²

In the aftermath of these statements other officials such as Fallon attempted to diffuse the concerns by placing them in a greater context of optimism.¹⁵³ However, the lasting impression left many in the PRC confused about the road ahead for military relations.

¹⁴⁹ Interview by author, 9 June 2006, Shanghai, China with Zhang Pei, Deputy Director, Department of Strategic Studies, Shanghai Institute of International Studies.

¹⁵⁰ Susan Craig, *Chinese Perceptions of Traditional and Non-Traditional Security Threats* (Unpublished paper, Foreign Military Studies Office, 2006), 27. (This paper is expected to be published by the Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College in late March 2007)

¹⁵¹ Department of Defense, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs), *Secretary Rumsfeld’s Remarks to the International Institute for Strategic Studies* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 4 June 2005).

<http://www.defenselink.mil/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=3216> (accessed 12 January 2007).

¹⁵² Guo Xuetang, “Maintaining an Asymmetric but Stable China-U.S. Military Relationship,” in *China’s ‘Peaceful Rise’ in the 21st Century: Domestic and International Conditions*, ed. Sujian Guo (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Unlimited), 168.

¹⁵³ Admiral William Fallon, Commander, Pacific Forces, *Remarks to the Press at the U.S. Consulate General, Hong Kong*, 11 September 2005.

If Rumsfeld's recent comments were misconstrued, his pattern of actions throughout his tenure were less ambiguous. Following the EP-3 incident in 2001 it was Rumsfeld who ordered a halt to Sino-American military contacts and established procedures that required future visits to be personally reviewed and approved by his office.¹⁵⁴ A year later, Rumsfeld declined an invitation to visit the PRC, sending lower-level officials instead.¹⁵⁵ The most recent Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), endorsed by the SECDEF and published in 2006, contained for the first time a section focused on China alone. The report cited China as the only potential competitor to the United States.¹⁵⁶

Given Rumsfeld's substantial influence and autonomy within the cabinet, coupled with Kingdon's views on the influence of presidential appointees on the agenda setting phase of decision making, Figure 3 may now be better explained. Since it appeared that Bush promoted an engagement-oriented foreign policy with the PRC similar to Clinton and that the EP-3 incident had only a temporary impact on the military relationship, perhaps the views of the SECDEF had the greater impact on military contacts. As Figure 7 shows, the level of military contact since 1993 not only reflected changes in executive leadership, but also coincided with Rumsfeld's reappointment to the position of SECDEF. If Bush promoted an engagement-oriented policy and gave Rumsfeld autonomy to implement that policy, it appears that it was Rumsfeld's cautious views that curtailed military contacts during the start of the twenty-first century. During the Bush Administration it appears the DoD was less responsive to the principal's direction than was the case during the Clinton Era.

¹⁵⁴ Jing-Dong Yuan, "Sino-American Military Relations Since Tiananmen: Restoration, Progress and Pitfalls," *Parameters, U.S. Army War College Quarterly*, 33, no.1 (Spring 2003): 55, 64.

¹⁵⁵ Bill Gertz, "Rumsfeld declines Beijing invitation to visit," *Washington Times*, 22 June 2002.

¹⁵⁶ Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2006), 28–30.

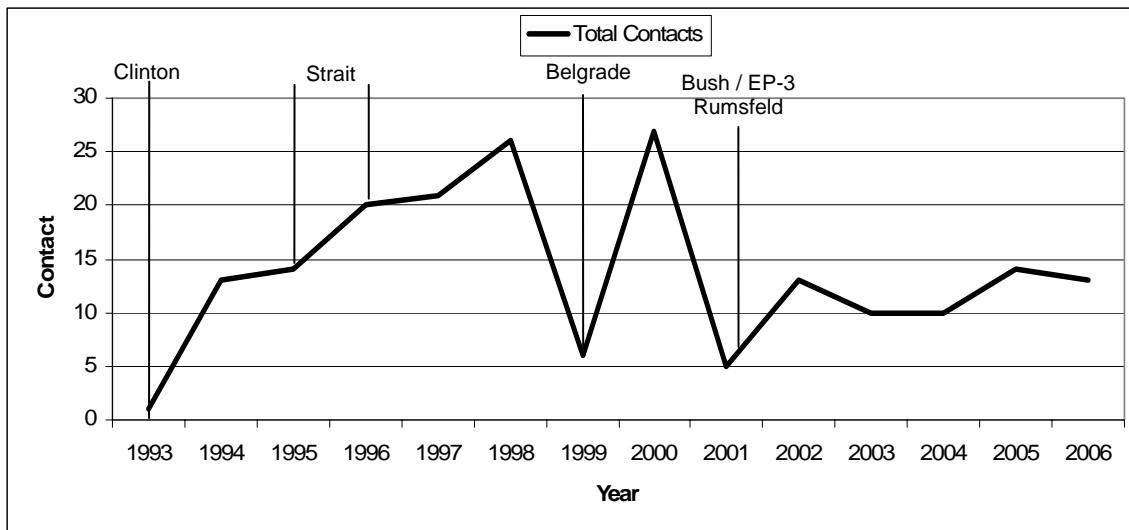


Figure 7. Total Sino-American Military Contacts¹⁵⁷

3. CJCS

To a lesser extent the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) played a role in articulating military relations policies and participating in their execution. As the principal military advisor to the President,¹⁵⁸ the CJCS played a visible role in expressing the administration's views concerning military contacts with the PRC. In the past decade the CJCS has also made overtures toward greater military cooperation with the PRC. Nearly ten years previous to Fallon's testimony, General Shalikashvili's remarks before the National Defense University in Beijing were similar.

...our two nations are pursuing military-to-military ties to improve communications, reduce potential misunderstandings and carry out mutually beneficial activities. Some of these military-to-military contacts

¹⁵⁷ Derived from Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress*, 2007; Burns, *USS Paul F. Foster Completes Visit to Qingdao, China*; and Cole, *U.S., China Complete Combined Search, Rescue Exercise*. This chart captures only high-level and functional exchanges found in Kan and two related news articles concerning ship visits. Lower-level contacts between the PRC and the United States are not captured in Kan's report and therefore, are not included.

¹⁵⁸ *U.S. Code*, Title 10, Subtitle A, Part I, Chapter 5, Sec 151.b.1., (1986). This section was added as a result of changes made by the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 which reorganized the DoD.

will be symbolically important, even if relatively simple affairs... But at the same time, there are aspects of our military-to-military ties that are more substantive.¹⁵⁹

President Clinton said that we are anxious to see a China that is ‘stable politically and open economically, that respects human rights and the rule of law, and that becomes a full partner in building a secure international order.’ The mutual interests of China and the United States demand better understanding, clearer communications, greater confidence and deeper cooperation. And military-to-military contacts must be an essential part of all that.¹⁶⁰

These prepared remarks in Beijing were a direct reflection of the Clinton Administration’s policies. Shalikashvili’s comments were given at the height of senior-level contacts during the Clinton years and reflected Clinton Administration policy. The same was true of Chairman General Myers during his tenure in the Bush Administration. As Bush’s sanctions on China increased, contacts decreased and CJCS comments were limited. During Myers’ tenure from 2001 to 2005, very few public comments, news releases or prepared remarks spoke of military relations’ policies with the PRC.¹⁶¹

The CJCS position was designed to “be a clear and independent voice, providing the best military advice in an apolitical, non-partisan manner.”¹⁶² So then, one might ask if CJCS comments in recent years were genuine beliefs of the Chairman or simply a reflection of Administration views. Unfortunately, given the greater responsibilities of the CJCS, the role of the CJCS in Sino-American military relations policy and implementation was limited (compared to that of the SECDEF and CDRUSPACOM). Making any reliable conclusions about the CJCS’ influence on Sino-American military relations is difficult. Since 1994 the CJCS only traveled to the PRC three times:

¹⁵⁹ Department of Defense, *U.S./China Share Interests in Peace and Stability, Prepared Remarks of Army General John M. Shalikashvili, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, at Chinese People’s Liberation Army National Defense University, Beijing, 14 May 1997.* www.defenselink.mil (accessed 13 November 2006).

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ A cursory examination of news releases, press conferences, testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, and prepared remarks during General Myer’s five year tenure found only one event where a specific focus on Sino-American military relations existed. This was during his January 2004 trip to China. That statement was retrieved from http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/en/doc/2004-01/13/content_298356.htm (accessed 16 January 2007).

¹⁶² Peter Pace, General, United States Marine Corps, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, *The 16th Chairman’s Guidance to the Joint Staff: Shaping the Future*, 1 October 2005.

Shalikashvili in 1997, Shelton in 2000 and Myers in 2004...hardly enough to measure trends.¹⁶³ What is clear, however, is that the public statements from those holding this post rarely, if ever, diverged from the views of the SECDEF. A sampling of the press conferences, testimony and public statements by the CJCS concerning China from 1997 to 2006 showed no sign of dissent between the SECDEF and the CJCS.¹⁶⁴

4. Summary

The influence of senior defense officials on the military relations policies and practices of the United States cannot be taken lightly. From the evidence presented above, it appears changes in the SECDEF directly impacted the implementation of national policy. During the Clinton Era, the SECDEF was closely aligned with the views of the President. Yet, once Rumsfeld took over during the Bush Administration, given the latitude afforded him, the DoD responsiveness to the President's engagement-oriented policies seemed to wane. Despite an overall foreign policy of engagement, the military held a more reserved stance with limited exchanges in comparison to the previous administration's level of engagement.

Unlike the SECDEF, the CDRUSPACOM appears to have held a more consistent advocacy of military engagement with the PRC despite changes in the executive branch, legislative majority and shifts in overall foreign relations policies coming from Washington, D.C. But actions taken by other actors involved in military relations policy making and implementation, especially those at a level below the SECDEF, such as the CDRUSPACOM, were sometimes viewed as rhetoric given the SECDEF's clear and public statements that contradicted the actions of lower-level actors. For example, while Admiral Fallon openly encouraged increased military exchange and promoted more transparency with the PRC, comments by SECDEF that indicated the PRC remained a threat countered Admiral Fallon's comments and practices. The Chinese, rightfully so,

¹⁶³ Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress, 2007*, 5.

¹⁶⁴ A review of more than twenty press releases, transcripts, press conferences and public statements by the CJCS from 1997 to 2006 showed comments consistent with the SECDEF position on China at that given time. In many cases, when the CJCS' replied to questions concerning his views on China, the CJCS directly referred to and reiterated the SECDEF position on China, then indicated his views were in line with those of the SECDEF.

placed greater weight on Rumsfeld's comments.¹⁶⁵ It is these types of contradictions and shifts in policy that have negatively impacted the ability of the United States and the PRC to establish a strategic military relationship.

¹⁶⁵ Interview by author, 9 June 2006, Shanghai, China with Zhang Pei, Deputy Director, Department of Strategic Studies, Shanghai Institute of International Studies.

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IV. CONCLUSION

In the last decade, fears over China's economic growth and increased regional and global influence have dominated the agenda of many scholars, think tankers, public officials and the media. The President, Congress, DoD, and non-governmental actors have debated how to treat the PRC over the last few decades. However, the polarized debate that has vacillated between seeing China as a "friend" and "foe" for years appears to have increasingly leaned toward perceptions of a "China threat" in the last decade.

Many consider Bill Gertz as an authoritative source on the inner-workings of the various actors in Washington, D.C.¹⁶⁶ His articles generally reflect the views and concerns of those with the greatest equity and interest in the Sino-American relationship. From 2003 to 2005 alone, even during the height of the Iraq War, the percentage of his articles relating to the fears of China's rise went from 8 percent to 41 percent.¹⁶⁷ Given Gertz' credibility as an author who accurately expresses the views of Washington, D.C., one can argue that the fears of the major actors in Sino-American relations have risen at a corresponding rate. Consistent with this assertion, the recent hearing held by the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission was wrought with testimony from senior DoD and State Department officials who are increasingly fearful of China's growing influence and the lack of United States appropriate, more aggressive response.¹⁶⁸

As Richard Weitz wrote, the "...bilateral defense relationship has traditionally served as a proverbial canary in the coal mine, acutely vulnerable to harmful

¹⁶⁶ Murray Hiebert, "Red Scare," *Far East Economic Review*, 12 October 2000. <http://www.gertzfile.com/gertzfile/FEEArticle.html> (accessed 31 January 2007).

¹⁶⁷ Simple content analysis of Gertz' articles written for the Washington Times from 2000 to 2005 found that articles relating to China's military modernization, missile technology and uncertain military intentions towards Taiwan and United States interests in the Asia-Pacific increased dramatically. As a International Correspondent for the Washington Times, one would have expected the frequency of articles related to China would have decreased as attention to United States-led operations in Iraq took center stage.

¹⁶⁸ U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, *Hearing on the U.S.-China Relationship: Economics and Security in Perspective*, 1-2 February 2007. Hearing statements can be found at: http://www.uscc.gov/hearings/2007hearings/hr07_02_1_2.php (accessed 6 February 2007).

environmental changes.”¹⁶⁹ With the end of a common enemy in the Soviet Union, the United States and the PRC have failed to find common ground that would have created an enduring relationship free from the ebbs and flows of domestic politics. Both nations faced internal pressures to manage the Sino-American military relationship through inconsistent means and fluctuating objectives. In many cases, the President, Congress, and other political actors use the DoD as a tool to signal American displeasure with PRC policies and practices.

For the Chinese, the objectives of foreign military relations center on gaining increased knowledge that enhance their military modernization efforts and, correspondingly, their regional and global position. For the United States, the objectives lean towards influencing the behavior of the PRC more in line with United States’ global and regional interests. These conflicting approaches and the infusion of domestic factors are the largest obstacle in Sino-American military relations.

A. FINDINGS

Recent history suggests the determinants of Sino-American military relations policies rest mostly in the realm of domestic politics. Based on this cursory examination of the major actors in United States foreign military relations policies and the implementation of those policies since President Nixon’s initiation of renewed engagement with the PRC, some observations can be made:

- The CDRUSPACOM has been the most engaged and consistent advocate of increased military-to-military relations across a broad spectrum of contacts regardless of the temperament in Washington, D.C.;
- While internationally significant events had an impact on military relations for a year or two, the more significant and enduring shifts in military-to-military policy have been driven by domestic politics and changes in defense leadership;
- Despite claims of “gaining momentum” by many of the actors in both the PRC and United States, military-to-military contacts appear no better off in 2006 than in the 1980s

¹⁶⁹ Richard Weitz, “Persistent Barriers to Sino-American Military Dialogue,” *China Brief*, 6, no. 18 (6 September 2006): 8.

These findings, however, are incomplete. Further qualitative and quantitative research is needed to fully validate these observations.

B. NEED FOR FURTHER STUDY

What has not been adequately examined in this thesis or in recent works is a more in-depth measurement of military responsiveness. While anecdotal and cursory evidence such as that found in Kan's 2007 report,¹⁷⁰ indicates that senior defense officials "towed the party line," a more vigorous examination of lower-level contacts and exchanges suggests a more consistent level of contact that is immune to the ebbs and flows in overarching military relations policies. Gaining access to the DoD annual military-to-military reports sent to Congress and evaluating the DoD database that contains more detailed information on every defense traveler to the PRC (as developed as a result of the requirements found in the 2000 NDAA) would be crucial steps towards filling this void.

It may be presumed that the information in this database would contain the rank of every member traveling, the reason for the visit, expected counterpart interactions and duration of visit. From these data one may employ trend analysis to determine the changes in the frequency of contacts, the level of contact by military grade/rank, and the substance of contacts. With this information, coupled with the official policy changes and political/defense leader statements over time, one may better assess the military's responsiveness to changes in policy. Additionally, one may assess the nature of past military contacts as they related to the DoD's stated objectives. It may be determined whether military contacts were in line with stated objectives or if those contacts failed to make progress towards achieving those objectives. Unfortunately, the database that compiles this information is classified and therefore beyond the scope of this thesis. Additional research would need to be done at the appropriate classification level.

¹⁷⁰ Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress, 2006*; and Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress, 2007*. This report, while an important summary of military-to-military contacts between senior defense officials from the DoD and MOD, lacks the details of lower-level contacts and exchanges such as cadets, junior officers and enlisted personnel. These contacts are critical to increasing understanding, reducing suspicion and the future cooperation between the PRC and the United States. The details of those lower-level visits can be found in the annual DoD reports to Congress under Sect 1201(e) of P.L. 106-65, of which, most are classified.

In addition to information obtained from a more detailed analysis of the DoD database on defense travelers to the PRC, reviews of the annual DoD reports to Congress on the current state of Sino-American military-to-military contacts, as required by Sect. 1201(e) of P.L. 106-65, would also provide more detailed information that would enhance the evidence presented in this thesis. Unfortunately, all but the 2001 and 2006 reports are classified. The 2001 report was the first of its kind and therefore had little useful information relating to qualitative or quantitative analysis. The 2006 report, however, contained substantially more detailed information that would allow researchers more in-depth evidence of DoD contacts.

For example, while Kan's report lists 14 military contacts for 2005, the DoD report shows 44 contacts for the same year. Kan acknowledges that her report excludes lower-level contacts such as academic exchanges and multilateral conferences, which predominate in the 2006 DoD report.¹⁷¹ Obviously, given the 30-visit difference between the two sources, the occurrence of lower-level and multilateral contacts is significant. Given the disparity between these two sources, and the fact that only one of the DoD reports was available, the DoD data were not incorporated into this study. Since inclusion of the more-detailed DoD data for 2005 would have placed an artificial spike in the trend data, they were excluded. In order to gain a better understanding of the actual levels of military exchange and contact between these two nations, future studies must include *all* contacts and therefore, must be at the classified level.

C. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

This brief review of the historical contacts between the DoD and the MOD provides a perspective on the development of military relations policies and the influences of the major actors involved in that development and subsequent implementation. Unfortunately, this thesis only adds to a long line of publications that have advocated change to the Sino-American military relationship. Since the 1980s, numerous authors, scholars and defense leaders have called for changes in policy and implementation with little resultant change in the United States.

¹⁷¹ Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress, 2007*, 26.

However, based on this review and with the goal of improved relations, some recommendations for future military relations policies and practices can be formulated and are presented with the hope that one day, changes can and will occur. Specifically, the United States can revise its objectives, open new opportunities for contact, eliminate the notion of reciprocity and dismiss calls for legislative change.

1. Revised Objectives

While the United States continually demands increased transparency from the PRC, it is the United States that has lacked clear direction for its military relations with the PRC. In this case, the PRC was very clear about what it hoped to gain from military relations with every nation it engaged. Its goals are worth restating.

- To shape the international environment in support of key Chinese national security objectives
- To improve political and military relations with foreign countries
- To *enhance China's military and defense industry modernization*
- To *provide military assistance to countries in the developing world*
- To *acquire knowledge in modern military doctrine, operations, training, military medicine, administration, and a host of non-combat related areas* (emphasis added)¹⁷²

Unfortunately, since the 1980s, the United States has been less than clear in defining its objectives for military relations with the PRC. In 1994 several policy documents, official testimonies and public statements provide clues to the objective of military relations but no single document clearly describes the United States' objectives. However, starting in the mid- to late 1990s one can see a common thread in all of these sources: the desire to shape and influence the behavior of the PRC.

By the end of the 1990s, the DoD was beginning to provide clearer indications of its objectives. In briefing Congress in March 1997, the DoD said the objectives of mil-to-mil relations were to:

- Increase PLA transparency;
- Demonstrate U.S. military capabilities;

¹⁷² Allen and McVadon, *China's Foreign Military Relations*, iv.

- Advance U.S.-PRC security dialogue through discussions with PLA leadership;
- Develop confidence building measures (CBMs) designed to reduce chances of miscalculations and accidents between operational forces;
- Pursue bilateral functional exchanges that are beneficial to DoD and the U.S. military (e.g., military medicine) and/or that provide operational insights on the PLA;
- Routinize senior-level defense dialogue to ensure open communications during tensions;
- Monitor the PLA's influence in PRC internal politics and foreign policy decision-making; and
- Expand PLA participation in appropriate multinational and multilateral military activities¹⁷³

The first objective seeks to alter PRC practice and calls for increased transparency...a theme that would not subside over time. Unfortunately, as Lampton points out, "...transparency is not universally beneficial or applicable, particularly as it may expose the vulnerabilities of weak nations."¹⁷⁴ The second objective, while not explicit, also seeks to alter PRC behavior. This objective aims at showing the PRC just how capable the U.S. armed forces are with the hope that the obvious gap between these two nations' militaries would have a deterrent effect on the PRC. The United States hopes that the PRC will realize the gap is wide and nearly insurmountable and will therefore give up all efforts to catch up with the only remaining superpower.

Unfortunately for the United States the opposite has been true. Instead of withdrawing from modernization plans, the PRC has focused more effort into countering the U.S. military might, not through an arms race, but by identifying key vulnerabilities and developing counter-effects that would prey on United States' critical nodes.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress*, 2007, 11.

¹⁷⁴ David M. Lampton, ed., *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978–2000* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 275.

¹⁷⁵ Michael Pillsbury, "The Assassin's Mace Debate: Pipe Dream or Silver Bullet," *Chinese Military Update*, 1, no. 6 (November/December 2003); and William J. Broad and David E. Sanger, "Flexing Muscle, China Destroys Satellite in Test," *NY Times*, 19 January 2007. <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/19/world/asia/19china.html?r=1&th&emc=th&oref=slogin> (accessed 19 January 2007).

The last objective presented to Congress continues this “influence strategy” by attempting to push the PRC into greater participation in international military regimes and protocols. Again, the United States, while *clearer* in its stated objectives than in previous years, still rests its success in the hands of the PRC. Unfortunately, all of these statements measured success as the ability of the United States to influence the PRC.

Future objectives should focus on clearly stating Washington’s goals in the Asia-Pacific, reducing suspicion between both militaries, and learning from one another. Taking the goals of “changing behavior” or “influencing the other party” out of military-to-military contact objectives increases the chances of mutual understanding. Recommending new strategies and implementation mechanisms without a set of new, clearly-stated and consistent objectives remains a futile task.

2. Future Contact Opportunities

Like the United States, PRC military exchange opportunities are often highly controlled by senior political and defense leaders to ensure continued secrecy and security and are subject to domestic and international events of change. For instance, following the 1995–6 Taiwan Strait Crises, the Chinese Minister of Defense stopped travel to the United States for more than seven years.¹⁷⁶ Similarly, following the 2001 EP-3 collision with a Chinese fighter jet, some high-level military exchanges (senior colonels through major general) were curtailed for nearly three years.¹⁷⁷ Several specialties, such as intelligence, have been strictly prohibited from travel outside the PRC entirely while the member served on active duty.¹⁷⁸

This latter restriction in some regard runs contrary to the objectives outlined by Allen and McVadon and the National Defense White Paper but appears justifiably necessary to maintaining secrecy and security. This cautious stance appears even more necessary when one considers Carol Atkinson’s recent work which finds American

¹⁷⁶ *China’s National Defense in 2004*.

¹⁷⁷ Interview by author, 8 June 2006, Shanghai, China with a retired PLA senior colonel who now serves as a senior director at a scholarly institution.

¹⁷⁸ Interview by author, 7 June 2006, Shanghai, China with a recently demobilized PLA lieutenant colonel who served as an intelligence officer for 16 years.

“military engagement activities [inclusive of military exchanges] were positively associated with liberalizing trends with the most pronounced effects for authoritarian states.”¹⁷⁹ In an era in which the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) legitimacy is considered by many as fragile, and given the important role of the PLA in backing the CCP, the need to reduce PLA exposure to democratic institutions cannot be taken lightly.

Despite the history of restrictions and the necessity for security, leaders in both nations have advocated for increased contact. Several opportunities for increased transparency and open dialogue remain untapped. In 2006 Admiral Fallon invited PLA General Liang to meet with the Pacific and Asian chiefs of defense, a forum in which the PLA has never participated.¹⁸⁰ While this is another small step to incorporate the PRC in such forums, the PRC has yet to attend other high-level dialogues such as a similar forum hosted by PACOM, the Annual Chiefs of Defense Conference held in Hawaii each fall since 1999.¹⁸¹ PRC participation in more senior forums and conferences to PRC participation will improve understanding, reduce suspicion and create an environment where further, more substantive exchanges can be explored.

Other opportunities exist as well. As Fallon stated in his press conference in 2006, the United States needs to continue mid- and lower-level exchanges.¹⁸² Only through “one-on-one discussions with counterparts in both countries”¹⁸³ can our future defense leaders gain a better understanding of the PLA. Chinese sources acknowledge the importance of such contacts.

The greatest opportunity for military exchange remains with cadets and junior service members who are immune to the politics found within our governments. These will be the people who determine the fate of our [future military] relationship.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁹ Carol Atkinson, “Constructivist Implications of Material Power: Military Engagement and the Socialization of States, 1972–2000,” *International Studies Quarterly*, 50 (2006): 531.

¹⁸⁰ Fallon, *Media Press Conference*.

¹⁸¹ According to J51 at PACOM, the PRC has been invited to each conference but has never attended.

¹⁸² Fallon, *Media Press Conference*.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Interview by author, 8 June 2006, Shanghai, China with a retired PLA senior colonel who now serves as a senior director at a scholarly institution.

Other Chinese officials shared similar views. After Admiral Fallon's May 2006 visit to the PRC the Deputy Chief of the General Staff was reported as saying,

The two armies will continue to enhance exchanges and cooperation in institutional exchanges, military academy exchanges, warship visit exchanges, humanitarian relief and disaster reduction, coping with non-traditional threats, and in other areas. These activities of exchange visits have promoted the development of relations between the two armies.¹⁸⁵

Again, it appears that the PRC remains receptive to broadening the scope of exchange beyond the senior-level dialogues or obligatory "show and tells," but only two such lower-level exchanges have occurred since 2005.¹⁸⁶

Whatever the opportunity, whether it is junior contacts or senior-level conferences, the goals should go beyond simple 'show and tell' events. Rumsfeld's historic visit to the 2nd Artillery Headquarters in 2005¹⁸⁷ was considered a huge step towards transparency, but what can be said to have been gained from this visit? Undoubtedly, the Secretary walked through a sterile tour of the facility where he saw rooms with fresh paint, took overview briefings on the mission of the command and read the obligatory 'Welcome Secretary Rumsfeld' signs strategically posted throughout the area.¹⁸⁸ But aside from the symbolic gesture of such a visit, was there much to be gained in terms of increased understanding and confidence building?

Many of the contacts over the last few decades involved simply seeing military equipment such as tanks, planes and ships. With the end of the cold war, access to Soviet made military equipment is remarkably easy. Is there a need to see another jet fly in the PRC? Military intelligence officers can provide the envelope, maximum payload and range of any aircraft in the world inventory, so why then is it important to see the same

¹⁸⁵ James Mulvenon, "Sino-U.S. Military Relations and the Admiral Fallon Visit," *China Leadership Monitor*, 18 (2006): 2, citing Tian Yuan, "Cao Gangchuan Meets with Commander of US Pacific Command," *Jiefangjun bao*, 11 May 2006.

¹⁸⁶ Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress, 2007*, 59–61.

¹⁸⁷ Weitz, *Persistent Barriers to Sino-American Military Dialogue*, 6.

¹⁸⁸ Bill Gertz, "China expected to put on the charm for Rumsfeld," *Washington Times*, 14 October 2005. <http://www.washtimes.com/national/20051013-110725-9009r.htm> (accessed 31 January 2007)

plane flown by the PLA? These types of visits (sometimes termed “showcase pieces”)¹⁸⁹ have limited utility and should be set aside for more constructive contacts where face-to-face conversations become the norm.

In addition to “showcase pieces,” other forums of limited utility have been included as *successful* military exchanges. The inclusion of Sino-American contacts related to POW/MIA operations, GPS coordination and Air Traffic Control measures is arguably not representative of traditional military-to-military contacts. While these types of exchanges are extremely important for their own designated purposes, including these events when measuring the frequency of military contacts between the United States and the PRC distorts trend data and makes claims of “gaining momentum” even less credible. As Figure 8 shows, military contacts related to these three areas accounted for more than 14 percent of all contacts from 1993 to 2006.¹⁹⁰

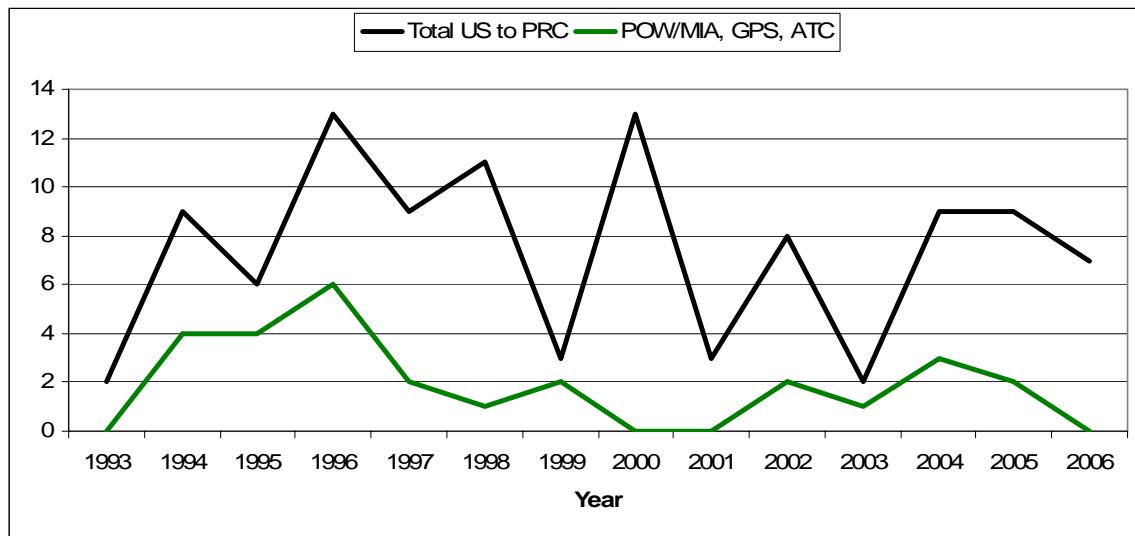


Figure 8. Total Sino-American Military Contacts versus POW/MIA, GPS and ATC Related Contacts¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁹ Department of Defense, *Undersecretary Feith's Media Roundtable on U.S.-China Defense Consultative Talks*.

¹⁹⁰ Derived from Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress*, 2007.

¹⁹¹ Derived from Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress*, 2007; Burns, *USS Paul F. Foster Completes Visit to Qingdao, China*; and Cole, *U.S., China Complete Combined Search, Rescue Exercise*.

It appears that even Congress increasingly understands the importance of broader levels of exchange, even within the confines of Sect. 1201 limits. The 109th Congress introduced two sections in the Defense Authorization Bill that would have mandated NDU trips to the PRC and Taiwan as part of the course of study and require service academy cadets and midshipmen to study key languages like Chinese.¹⁹² Unfortunately, these requirements were dropped from the final bill during conference with the Senate. It appears that even Congress remains narrowly focused on the 1201 prohibitions and reluctant to encourage broader exchange.

3. Undue Calls for Reciprocity

One of the key obstacles challenging the definition of good military-to-military relations is premised on the concept of reciprocity. Seen throughout several public statements from senior defense officials and politicians in the United States government,¹⁹³ this concept does not resonate with the PRC. By focusing on events that are “a return in kind”¹⁹⁴ the United States creates unrealistic expectations much like those of “influencing” and “changing” PRC behavior. Yet, on what data are these claims of limited reciprocity based? As Figure 9 shows, the PRC appears to have been reciprocal, if not in substance, at least in the frequency of visits between 1993 and 2006. Each spike in United States visits to the PRC was followed by a spike in visits by the PRC to the United States, almost without exception. Similar trends appear in ship visits over the same period.

This is not to say that substantive reciprocity is not important. It does, however, recognize the differences in perspective between the United States and the PRC. For the United States, reciprocity means a return of access and sharing in kind. Since this is not a

¹⁹² Dumbaugh, *CRS Report for Congress: China-U.S. Relations*, 30.

¹⁹³ The call for reciprocity can be seen in a multitude of documents including: Fallon, *Media Press Conference*; and Department of Defense, *U.S./China Share Interests*.

¹⁹⁴ Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. s.v. “Reciprocal.” <http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/reciprocal> (accessed 16 January 2007).

normative value found in Chinese culture, the PRC attempts to reciprocate in frequency to give the appearance of acquiescing to U.S. demands.¹⁹⁵

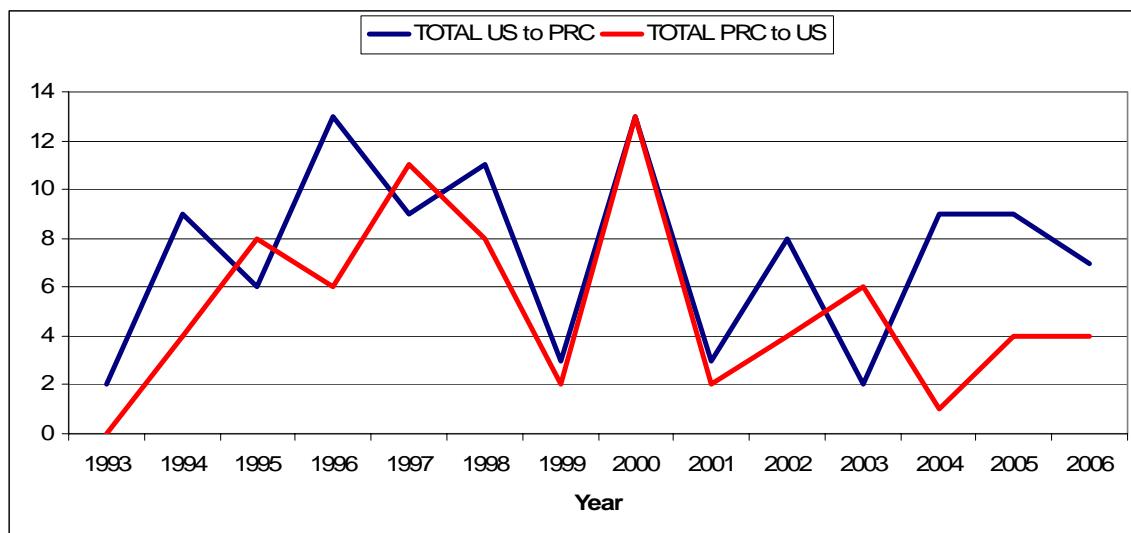


Figure 9. Military Contacts. United States Delegations to the PRC versus PRC Delegations to the United States¹⁹⁶

Calls for “a more equal exchange of information”¹⁹⁷ have fallen on deaf ears. From the PRC’s perspective, full reciprocity was not possible since “some of their units were embarrassingly backward, the PLA had only limited funds for exchanges, and excessive transparency could expose Chinese military vulnerabilities to a potential adversary.”¹⁹⁸ If the United States continues to rely on reciprocal contacts many opportunities will slip by during the lengthy wait. If, however, the United States defines its objectives more in line with Feith’s comments concerning clear communication, reciprocity is no longer necessary.

¹⁹⁵ Charles W. Hooper, “Statement on US-China Military Exchanges Before the U.S. –China Economic and Security Review Commission,” *Hearing on U.S.-China Relationship: Economics and Security in Perspective*, 2 February 2007. http://www.uscc.gov/hearings/2007hearings/written_testimonies/7_02_01_02wrts/07_02_1_2_hooper_charles_statement.pdf (accessed 5 March 2007).

¹⁹⁶ Derived from Kan, *CRS Report for Congress: U.S. – China Military Contacts: Issues for Congress*, 2007; Burns, *USS Paul F. Foster Completes Visit to Qingdao, China*; and Cole, *U.S., China Complete Combined Search, Rescue Exercise*.

¹⁹⁷ Department of Defense, *U.S./China Share Interests*.

¹⁹⁸ Kurt Campbell and Richard Weitz, “The Limits of U.S.-China Military Cooperation: Lessons from 1995–1999,” *The Washington Quarterly*, 29, no. 1 (Winter 2005–6): 176.

4. Misguided Focus on Changing the Law

Unfortunately, some have targeted the prohibitions and limitations found in P.L. 106-65, Sect. 1201, as some of the major obstacles for improved relations.¹⁹⁹ This misguided focus only detracts from the opportunities *allowed* by this legislation. Given that this legislation primarily places reporting and vetting requirements on the DoD, there are plenty of authorized activities that have yet to be fully explored. Functional exchanges in non-combat related areas such as medical services and civil affairs as well as increased dialogue concerning the application of professional military education and promotion systems as well as sharing expertise in humanitarian assistance are a few of those opportunities that are clearly within the limits of Sec 1201 yet to be fully explored by the DoD.

These non-combat related contacts would be of little risk to United States national security but would offer the Chinese an opportunity to develop service support functions that have positive international and humanitarian applications...a stated objective of current military relations policy. Similarly, by using benign contacts concerning military education, promotion processes and similar personnel areas the United States can help the PRC create a more professional force. While there are valid arguments that voice concerns about increasing the professionalism of the PLA, a more professional PLA that could provide greater stability to the military relationship would be not only in the best interest of the PRC but also the United States.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁹ Fallon, *Media Press Conference*; and David Finkelstein, “Is China’s Military Modernization Program a Growing Threat to the United States and Asia?” (presentation at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Debate Series, Reframing the China Policy Debate 3: The Implications of China’s Military Modernization Washington, D.C., 6 February 2007).

²⁰⁰ Karen Guttieri, “Professional Military Education in Democracies,” in *Who Guards the Guardians and How: Democratic Civil-Military Relations*, ed., Thomas C. Bruneau and Scott D. Tollefson (Austin, TX: University of Texas, 2006), 235–62.; Richard B. Cheney and Bill Taylor, Professional Military Education: An Asset for Peace and Prosperity (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1997); and Kang Dong, *Civil-Military Relations in China: Moving into the Year 2000* (Master’s Thesis, University of Nevada Reno, 1994). These works describe the value of a professional military force as it relates to civ-mil relations, compliance and stability.

D. SUMMARY

With these thoughts in mind the United States can begin to move forward in a new direction of military relations with the PRC. Setting aside outdated and unrealistic expectations/objectives the United States can create more consistent and stable military relations policies and practices that clearly convey American intent, reduce suspicion and enhance understanding on both sides of the Pacific.

The implications of such changes would not only improve the bilateral relationship between the United States and the PRC but also provide benefits to the entire Asia-Pacific Region. Major regional actors such as Japan, India, and the Koreas would benefit from a more clearly defined relationship between the regions largest power and its fastest growing power. While some nations like Japan may fear the implications of a closer Sino-American relationship on their own bilateral relationship with the United States, the benefits of greater military cooperation could significantly reduce the potential for an escalating security dilemma and arms race within the region.

The United States still has the greatest opportunity to affect this regional balance and should move in a more direct fashion to capitalize while that opportunity remains. If, however, the American' views continue to vacillate in this relationship, the ability to affect change through military relations with the PRC may pass as other regional actors gain influence and increase suspicion of a rising China.

APPENDIX A. PUBLIC LAW 106-65—OCT. 5, 1999 113 STAT.
721. SEC. 914. CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF CHINESE
MILITARY AFFAIRS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Defense shall establish a Center for the Study of Chinese Military Affairs as part of the National Defense University. The Center shall be organized under the Institute for National Strategic Studies of the University.

(b) QUALIFICATIONS OF DIRECTOR.—The Director of the Center shall be an individual who is a distinguished scholar of proven academic, management, and leadership credentials with a superior record of achievement and publication regarding Chinese political, strategic, and military affairs.

(c) MISSION.—The mission of the Center is to study and inform policymakers in the Department of Defense, Congress, and throughout the Government regarding the national goals and strategic posture of the People's Republic of China and the ability of that nation to develop, field, and deploy an effective military instrument in support of its national strategic objectives. The Center shall accomplish that mission by a variety of means intended to widely disseminate the research findings of the Center.

(d) STARTUP OF CENTER.—The Secretary of Defense shall establish the Center for the Study of Chinese Military Affairs not later than March 1, 2000. The first Director of the Center shall be appointed not later than June 1, 2000. The Center should be fully operational not later than June 1, 2001.

(e) IMPLEMENTATION REPORT.—

(1) Not later than January 1, 2001, the President of the National Defense University shall submit to the Secretary of Defense a report setting forth the President's organizational plan for the Center for the Study of Chinese Military Affairs, the proposed budget for the Center, and the timetable for initial and full operations of the Center. The President of the National Defense University shall prepare that report in consultation with the Director of the Center and the Director of the Institute for National Strategic Studies of the University.

(2) The Secretary of Defense shall transmit the report under paragraph (1), together with whatever comments the Secretary considers appropriate, to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives not later than February 1, 2001.

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**APPENDIX B. PUBLIC LAW 106–65—OCT. 5, 1999 113 STAT.
721. SEC. 1201. LIMITATION ON MILITARY-TO-MILITARY
EXCHANGES AND CONTACTS WITH CHINESE PEOPLE’S
LIBERATION ARMY.**

(a) **LIMITATION.**—The Secretary of Defense may not authorize any military-to-military exchange or contact described in subsection (b) to be conducted by the armed forces with representatives of the People’s Liberation Army of the People’s Republic of China if that exchange or contact would create a national security risk due to an inappropriate exposure specified in subsection (b).

(b) **COVERED EXCHANGES AND CONTACTS.**—Subsection (a) applies to any military-to-military exchange or contact that includes inappropriate exposure to any of the following:

- (1) Force projection operations.
- (2) Nuclear operations.
- (3) Advanced combined-arms and joint combat operations.
- (4) Advanced logistical operations.
- (5) Chemical and biological defense and other capabilities related to weapons of mass destruction.
- (6) Surveillance and reconnaissance operations.
- (7) Joint warfighting experiments and other activities related to a transformation in warfare.
- (8) Military space operations.
- (9) Other advanced capabilities of the Armed Forces.
- (10) Arms sales or military-related technology transfers.
- (11) Release of classified or restricted information.
- (12) Access to a Department of Defense laboratory.

(c) **EXCEPTIONS.**—Subsection (a) does not apply to any search and rescue or humanitarian operation or exercise.

(d) **ANNUAL CERTIFICATION BY SECRETARY.**—The Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives, not later than December 31 each year, a certification in writing as to whether or not any military-to-military exchange or contact during that calendar year was conducted in violation of subsection (a).

(e) **ANNUAL REPORT.**—Not later than March 31 each year beginning in 2001, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives a report providing the Secretary’s assessment of the current state of military-to-military exchanges and contacts with the People’s Liberation Army.

The report shall include the following:

- (1) A summary of all such military-to-military contacts during the period since the last such report, including a summary of topics discussed and questions asked by the Chinese participants in those contacts.
- (2) A description of the military-to-military exchanges and contacts scheduled for the next 12-month period and a plan for future contacts and exchanges.
- (3) The Secretary's assessment of the benefits the Chinese expect to gain from those military-to-military exchanges and contacts.
- (4) The Secretary's assessment of the benefits the Department of Defense expects to gain from those military-to-military exchanges and contacts.
- (5) The Secretary's assessment of how military-to-military exchanges and contacts with the People's Liberation Army fit into the larger security relationship between the United States and the People's Republic of China.

(f) REPORT OF PAST MILITARY-TO-MILITARY EXCHANGES AND CONTACTS WITH THE PRC.—Not later than March 31, 2000, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives a report on past military-to-military exchanges and contacts between the United States and the People's Republic of China. The report shall be unclassified, but may contain a classified annex, and shall include the following:

- (1) A list of the general and flag grade officers of the People's Liberation Army who have visited United States military installations since January 1, 1993.
- (2) The itinerary of the visits referred to in paragraph (2), including the installations visited, the duration of the visits, and the activities conducted during the visits.
- (3) The involvement, if any, of the general and flag officers referred to in paragraph (1) in the Tiananmen Square massacre of June 1989.
- (4) A list of the facilities in the People's Republic of China that United States military officers have visited as a result of any military-to-military exchange or contact program between the United States and the People's Republic of China since January 1, 1993.
- (5) A list of facilities in the People's Republic of China that have been the subject of a requested visit by the Department of Defense that has been denied by People's Republic of China authorities.
- (6) A list of facilities in the United States that have been the subject of a requested visit by the People's Liberation Army that has been denied by the United States.
- (7) Any official documentation (such as memoranda for the record, after-action reports, and final itineraries) and all receipts for expenses over \$1,000, concerning military-to-military exchanges or contacts between the United States and the People's Republic of China in 1999.
- (8) A description of military-to-military exchanges or contacts between the United States and the People's Republic of China scheduled for 2000.
- (9) An assessment regarding whether or not any People's Republic of China military officials have been shown classified material as a result of military-to-military exchanges or contacts between the United States and the People's Republic of China.

**APPENDIX C. PUBLIC LAW 106–65—OCT. 5, 1999 113 STAT.
721. SEC. 1202. ANNUAL REPORT ON MILITARY POWER OF
THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.**

(a) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than March 1 each year, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the specified congressional committees a report, in both classified and unclassified form, on the current and future military strategy of the People's Republic of China. The report shall address the current and probable future course of military-technological development on the People's Liberation Army and the tenets and probable development of Chinese grand strategy, security strategy, and military strategy, and of military organizations and operational concepts, through the next 20 years.

(b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—Each report under this section shall include analyses and forecasts of the following:

- (1) The goals of Chinese grand strategy, security strategy, and military strategy.
- (2) Trends in Chinese strategy that would be designed to establish the People's Republic of China as the leading political power in the Asia-Pacific region and as a political and military presence in other regions of the world.
- (3) The security situation in the Taiwan Strait.
- (4) Chinese strategy regarding Taiwan.
- (5) The size, location, and capabilities of Chinese strategic, land, sea, and air forces, including detailed analysis of those forces facing Taiwan.
- (6) Developments in Chinese military doctrine, focusing on (but not limited to) efforts to exploit a transformation in military affairs or to conduct preemptive strikes.
- (7) Efforts, including technology transfers and espionage, by the People's Republic of China to develop, acquire, or gain access to information, communication, space and other advanced technologies that would enhance military capabilities.
- (8) An assessment of any challenges during the preceding year to the deterrent forces of the Republic of China on Taiwan, consistent with the commitments made by the United States in the Taiwan Relations Act (Public Law 96–8).

(c) SPECIFIED CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—For purposes of this section, the term “specified congressional committees” means the following:

- (1) The Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.
- (2) The Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives.

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